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DEVOUT ^{Gal 10. H.c}
EXERCISES
OF THE
HEART

IN
*Meditation and Soliloquy,
Prayer and Praise.*

By the late PIOUS and INGENIOUS
Mrs. ROWE. (S.) K.

Reviewed and Published at her *Request*,
By I. WATTS, D.D.

, THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

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and *Crown* in the *Poultry*. M.DCC.XXXIX.

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T O

* * * * *

An intimate Friend of
Mrs. ROWE.

MADAM,



IF these pious ME-
DITATIONS of so
sublime a Genius
should be inscrib'd
to any Name, there is none
but YOUR's must have stood
in the Front of them. That

A 2 long

DEDICATION.

long and constant Intimacy of Friendship with which You delighted to honour her, that high Esteem and Veneration You are pleased to pay her Memory, and the sacred Likeness and Sympathy between two kindred Souls, absolutely determine where this Respect should be paid.

BESIDES, Madam, You well know, that some Copies out of these Papers have been Your own several Years by the Gift of the Deceased ; and the Favour You have done me
lately

DEDICATION.

lately by Your Permission to peruse them, has assisted the Corrections of these MANUSCRIPTS, and would add another Reason to support this Inscription of them, if Your Fear of assuming too much Honour could but have admitted this Piece of Justice.

I KNOW, Madam, Your Tendernefs and Indulgence to every thing Mrs. ROWE has written, cannot withhold Your Judgment from fufpecting some of her Expreflions to be a little too rapturous, and too

DEDICATION.

near a-kin to the Language of the mystical Writers; yet Your Piety and Candour will take no such Offence as to prevent Your best Improvement by them in all that is Divine and Holy: and may Your retired Hours find such happy Assistances and Elevations hereby, that you may commence the Joys of Angels and of blessed Spirits before-hand.

AND when Your valuable Life has been long extended amidst all the temporal Blessings you enjoy, and the Christian

DEDICATION.

stian Vertues You practise, may
You at the Call of God find a
gentle Dismission from Morta-
lity, and ascend on High to
meet Your deceased Friend in
Paradise. Nor can I suppose
that any of the Inhabitants of
that blissful Region will sooner
recognize Your glorify'd Spi-
rit, or will salute Your first Ap-
pearance there with a more
tender Sense of mutual Satis-
faction. There may You join
with Your beloved *Philomela*,
in paying celestial Worship in
exalted and unknown Forms,
to her God, and Your God ;

DEDICATION.

and may the Harmony of the
Place be assisted by Your united
Songs to *Jesus*, your common
Saviour!

I AM, Madam, with great
Sincerity and Esteem,

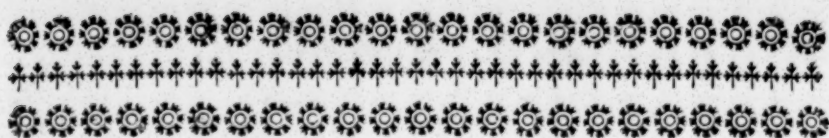
Your most Faithful

Newington,
Sept. 29.
1737.

and Obedient

Servant,

I. Watts.



T H E
P R E F A C E.



THE admirable Author of these devotional Papers has been in high Esteem among the Ingenious and the Polite, since so many excellent Fruits of her Pen, both in Verse and Prose have appear'd in Publick. She was early honoured under the feigned Name of Philomela before the World was allowed to know Mrs. Elizabeth Singer by the Name drawn from her Family, or that of Mrs. Rowe which she acquired by Marriage.

THO' many of her Writings that were publish'd in her Life-time discover a pious and heavenly Temper, and a warm Zeal for Religion and Virtue; yet she chose to conceal the Devotions of her Heart till she was got beyond the Censure and the Applause

x P R E F A C E.

plause of Mortals. 'Twas enough that God, whom she loved with ardent and supreme Affection, was Witness to all her secret and intense Breathings after him.

I N February last he was pleased to call her out of our World, and take her to himself. Some time after her Decease these Manuscripts were transmitted to me, all inclosed in one Sheet of Paper, and directed to me at Newington by her own Hand. In the midst of them I found her Letter, which intreated me to review them, and commit them to the Press. This Letter I have thought necessary to shew the World, not so much to discover my Right to publish these Papers, as to let the Reader see something more of that holy and heavenly Character which she maintain'd in an uniform Manner both in Life and Death.

'TIS now almost thirty Years ago since I was honour'd with her Acquaintance, nor could her great Modesty

deſty conceal all her ſhining Graces and Accompliſhments ; but it is not my Province to give a particular Account of this excellent Woman who has bleſſ'd and adorn'd our Nation and our Age. I expect, her Temper, her Conduct, and her Virtues will be ſet in a juſt and pleaſing Light among the Memoirs of her Life, by ſome near Relations, to whom the Care of her poetical Pieces, and her familiar Letters is committed.

THESE Devout Exerciſes are animated with ſuch Fire as ſeems to ſpeak the Language of holy Paſſion, and diſcovers them to be the Dictates of her Heart ; and thoſe who were favour'd with her chief Intimacy will moſt readily believe it. The Style, I confeſs, is raiſed above that of common Meditation or Soliloquy ; but let it be remember'd ſhe was no common Chriſtian. As her Virtues were ſublime, ſo her Genius was bright and ſparkling, and the Vivacity of her Imagination
had

had a Tincture of the Muse almost from her Childhood. This made it natural to her to express the inward Sentiments of her Soul in more exalted Language, and to paint her own Ideas in Metaphor and Rapture near a-kin to the Diction of Poesy.

THE Reader will here find a Spirit dwelling in Flesh, elevated into divine Transports, congenial to those of Angels and unbodied Minds. Her intense Love to her God kindles at every Hint, and transcends the Limits of Mortality. I scarce ever met with any devotional Writings which give us an Example of a Soul, at special Seasons, so far raised above every thing that is not immortal and divine.

YET she is conscious of her Frailties too : She sometimes confesses her Folly and her Guilt in the Sight of God, in the most affecting Language of a deep Humiliation. 'Tis with a pathetick Sensibility of her Weakness,
I and

P R E F A C E. xiii

and in the strongest Language of Self-displicity, she bewails her Offences against her Creator and Redeemer; and in her Intervals of Darknests, she vents her painful Complaints and Mournings for the Absence of her highest and best beloved.

*LET it be observed, that it was much the Fashion, even among some Divines of Eminence in former Years, to express the Fervours of devout Love to our Saviour in the Style of the Song of Solomon: And I must confess that several of my Composures in Verse written in younger Life were led by those Examples unwarily into this Track. But if I may be permitted to speak the Sense of maturer Age, I can hardly think this the happiest Language in which Christians should generally discover their warm Sentiments of Religion, since the clearer and more spiritual Revelations of the New Testament. Yet still it must be own'd, there are some Souls favour'd
with*

with such beatifying Visits from Heaven, and raptur'd with such a Flame of divine Affection, as more powerfully engages all animal Nature in their Devotions, and constrains them to speak their purest and most spiritual Exercises in such pathetick and tender Expressions as may be perversely profaned by an unholy Construction. And the Byass and Propensity toward this Style is yet stronger, where early Impressions of Piety have been made on the Heart by devout Writings of this kind.

IT should be remember'd also, there is nothing to be found here which rises above our Ideas; here are none of those absurd and incomprehensible Phrases which amuse the Ear with sounding Vanity, and hold Reason in sovereign Contempt: Here are no visionary Scenes of wild Extravagance, no Affectations of the tumid and unmeaning Style, which spreads a glaring Confusion over the Understanding;

standing; nothing that leads the Reader into the Region of those mystical Shadows and Darkneſs which abound in the Romiſh Writers, under the Pretence of refined Light and ſublime Ecſtaſy. Nor is the Character of this ingenious Author to be blemiſhed with any other Reproaches which have been ſometimes caſt on ſuch ſort of Meditations.

I KNOW it hath been ſaid, that this Language of Rapture addreſs'd to the Deity, is but a new Track given to the Flow of the ſofter Powers after the Diſappointment of ſome meaner Love; or, at leaſt, 'tis owing to the Want of a proper Object and Opportunity to fix thoſe tender Paſſions: But this cannot be allowed to be the Caſe here; for as Mrs. Rowe had been ſought early by ſeveral Lovers, ſo ſhe ſpent ſeveral Years of younger Life in the connubial State with a Gentleman of ſuch Accompliſhments and ſuch Circumſtances,

stances, that he was well fitted to be a Partner of her Joys and Cares.

I KNOW also that this soft and passionate Turn of religious Meditation has sometimes been imputed to Injuries and ill Treatment in the Marriage State, whereby the same Affections are wean'd from an undeserving Object, and pour'd out in amorous Language upon an Object supremely worthy and divine. But neither has this Reproach any Pretence in the present Case : That happy Pair had Souls so near a-kin to each other, that they persever'd in uncommon Amity and mutual Satisfaction, so long as Providence favour'd him with Life. 'Tis sufficiently evident then, that in these Meditations there is no secret panting after a mortal Love in the Language of Devotion and Piety.

*NOR yet can it be objected, that it was any Displacence and Peevishness toward other things round about her, that taught her to express herself with
such*

P R E F A C E. xvii

such Contempt of the Things of Mortality, and all the gay and tempting Scenes of the present State : She was by no means sour and morose, and out of Humour with the World, nor with her Acquaintance that dwelt in it : She often conversed freely with the Gay and the Great, and was in high Esteem among Persons of Rank and Honour. But Honour and Rank among Mortals, with all the Scenes of Gaiety and Greatness, were little, despicable, and forgotten Things, while in her devout Moments, her Eye and her Heart were fixed on God, the supreme Original of all Excellence and all Honour.

I N common Life she was affable and friendly with Persons of every Rank and Degree; and in her latter Years, as she drew nearer to Heaven, if she avoided any thing, it was Grandeur and publick Appearances on Earth. But she never so conceal'd
a
and

and abstracted herself from the Society of any of her Fellow-creatures, as to despise the meanest of her Species. She was ever kind and compassionate to the Distressed, and largely liberal to the Indigent. Nor did she neglect the daily Duties of human Life, under a vain Imagination that she moved in a higher Sphere, and was seraphically exalted above them.

IN short, there is nothing in these Papers that can justly support any such sort of Censures, tho' Men of corrupt Minds may cover the Bible itself with Slander and Ridicule. Let all such Readers stand aloof, nor touch these sacred Leaves, lest they pollute them.

THO' there is not one complete Copy of Verses amongst all these Transports of her Soul, yet she ever carry'd with her a Relish of Poesy even into her sacred Retirements. Sometimes she springs her Flight from a
Line

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Line or two of Verse, which her Memory had impress'd upon her Heart: Sometimes from the Midst of her religious Elevations she lights down upon a few Lines of some modern Poet, even Herbert as well as Milton, &c. though 'tis but seldom she cites their Names. At other times the Verses seem to be the Effusion of her own rapturous Thoughts in sudden Melody and Metre; or at least I know not whence the Lines are copy'd: But she most frequently does me the Honour to make use of some of my Writings in Verse in these holy Meditations of her Heart. Blessed be that God, who has so far favour'd any thing my Pen could produce, as to assist so sublime a Devotion.

FROM the different Appearance of the Paper and Ink in some of these Pieces, as well as from the early Transcripts of several of them among her Friends, 'tis evident they were written

in her younger Days; others are of a much later Original, tho' there is but one that bears a Date, and that is April 30. 1735. They seem to have been pen'd at special Seasons and Occasions throughout the course of her Life. A few of them bear the Corrections or Additions of her own Pen, which discovers itself by a little difference of the Hand-writing.

*THO' she was never tempted away from our common Christianity into the fashionable Apostasies of the Age; yet I am well informed from many Hands, that in her later Years she entered with more Zeal and Affection into some of the peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel: And 'tis evident that some of these devotional Pieces have a more evangelick Turn than others, and probably most of those were composed or corrected in the latter Part of Life. The Opposition which has of late been made to some
of*

of these Truths, gave occasion to her further Search into them, and her Zeal for them. However, I have placed these Papers all as I found them pinned up in a Wrapping-paper, tho' 'tis evident, from plain Circumstances, this is not the Order in which they were written, nor is that of any great Importance.

THO' these Writings give us the Aspirations of a devout Soul in her holy Retirements, when she had no Design to present the Publick with them; yet they did not want a great deal of Adjustment or Correction, in order to see the Light. The Numbers and the Titles are added by the Publisher, as well as the Breaks and Pauses, which give a sort of Rest to the Reader's Mind, and make the Review more easy. Here and there a too venturous Flight is a little moderated; sometimes a Meditation or a Sentence is compleated, which seemed very imperfect,

perfect, or a short Line or two inserted to introduce the Sense where the Language seem'd too abrupt, or the Meaning too obscure. Her Soul had a large Set of Ideas in present View, which made every Expression she used easy and perspicuous to herself when she wrote only for her own Use; tho' sometimes her entire Sense might not be quite so obvious to every Reader, without a little Introduction into her Track of Sentiments. Upon the whole, I must acknowledge I was very unwilling that this excellent Work should lose any Degrees of Elegance or Brightness by passing thro' my Hands.

W H E N the Manuscript came first under my Revisal, I read it over with the Eye of a Critick and a Friend, that I might publish it with Honour to the Hand that wrote it, and with religious Entertainment and Advantage to the World: nor was this Employment

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ployment destitute of its proper Satisfaction. But never did I feel the true Pleasure of these Meditations, till I had finished this Labour of the Head, and began to read them over again as Devout Exercises of the Heart: Then I endeavour'd to enter more entirely into the Spirit of the pious Author, and attempted to assume her Language as my own. But how much superior was the Satisfaction which I received from this Review, especially wheresoever I had Reason to hope I could pronounce her Words with Sincerity of Soul? How happily did this raise and entertain all my pleasing Passions, and gave me another sort of Delight than the dry critical Perusal of them, in order to judge concerning their Propriety? But I confess also, it was an abasing and mortifying Thought, when I found how often I was constrained to drop the sublime Expression from my Lips, or forbid my Tongue to use it, because my

own Attainments sunk so far beneath those sacred Elevations of Spirit, and fell so far short of those transcendent Degrees of Divine Affection and Zeal.

*LET me persuade all that peruse this Book, to make the same Experiment that I have done; and when they have shut out the World, and are reading in their Retirements, let them try how far they can speak this Language, and assume these Sentiments as their own: And by aspiring to follow them, may they find the same Satisfaction and Delight, or at least learn the profitable Lessons of Self Abasement and holy Shame: And may a noble and glorious Ambition excite in their Breasts a sacred Zeal to emulate so illustrious an Example. Whatsoever Ardours of divine Love have been kindled in a Soul united to Flesh and Blood, may also be kindled by the same Influences of Grace in
other*

other Spirits, labouring under the same Clogs and Impediments.

BUT perhaps, it will be necessary here to give a Caution to some humble Christians, that they would not make these higher Elevations of Piety and holy Joy the Test and Standard by which to judge of the Sincerity of their own Religion. Ten thousand Saints are arriv'd safe at Paradise, who have not been favour'd, like St. Paul, with a Rapture into the third Heaven, nor could ever arise to the affectionate Transports, and devout Joys of Mrs. Rowe : Yet I hope all serious Readers may find something here, which, thro' the Aids of the Blessed Spirit, may raise them above their usual Pitch, may give a new Spring to their religious Pleasures and their immortal Hopes, and thereby render their Lives more holy and heavenly.

T H A T

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THAT the Publication of this little Book may be favour'd with the divine Blessing for this happy End, is the sincere Desire and Request of the Publisher, as it was the real Motive of the ingenious and pious Writer to commit them, by my Hand, to the publick View. This sufficiently discovers itself in the following Letter.



To



To the REVEREND

Dr. WATTS, at *Newington*.

S I R,

THE Opinion I have of your Piety and Judgment is the Reason of my giving you the Trouble of looking over these Papers, in order to publish them; which I desire you to do as soon as you can conveniently; only you have full Liberty to suppress what you think proper.

I THINK there can be no Vanity in this Design, for I am sensible such Thoughts as these will not be for the Taste of the modish Part of the World; and before they appear, I shall be entirely disinterested in the Censure or Applause of Mortals.

THE Reflections were occasionally written, and only for my own Improvement; but I am not without Hopes that they may have the same Effect on some pious Minds, as the reading the Experiences of others have had on
my

xxviii *Mrs. ROWE's Letter*

my own Soul. The experimental Part of Religion has generally a greater Influence than its Theory; and if, when I am sleeping in the Dust, these Soliloquies should kindle a Flame of Divine Love in the Heart of the lowest and most despised Christian, be the Glory given to the great Spring of all Grace and Benignity.

I HAVE now done with mortal Things, and all to come is vast Eternity-----Eternity-----How transporting is the Sound! As long as God exists, my Being and Happiness is secure. These unbounded Desires, which the wide Creation cannot limit, shall be satisfy'd for ever. I shall drink at the Fountain Head of Pleasure, and be refresh'd with the Emanations of original Life and Joy. I shall hear the Voice of uncreated Harmony speaking Peace and ineffable Consolation to my Soul.

I EXPECT eternal Life, not as a Reward (*of Merit*) but a pure Act of Bounty. Detesting myself in every View I can take, I fly to the Righteousness and Atonement of my great Redeemer, for Pardon and Salvation; this is my only Consolation and Hope. *Enter not into Judgment, O Lord, with thy Servant; for in thy Sight shall no Flesh be justify'd.*

THRO'

to Dr. WATTS.

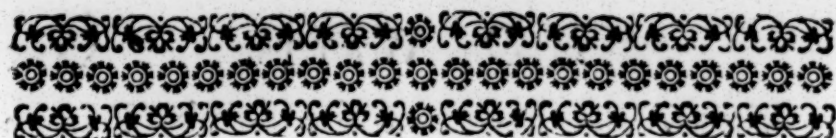
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THRO' the Blood of the Lamb, I hope
for an entire Victory over the last Enemy;
and that before this comes to you, I shall
have reach'd the celestial Heights; and while
you are reading these Lines, I shall be adoring
before the Throne of God, where Faith shall
be turn'd into Vision, and these languishing
Desires satisfy'd with the full Fruition of im-
mortal Love. Adieu.

ELIZ. ROWE.



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DEVOUT



DEVOUT
EXERCISES
OF THE
HEART, &c.



I. *Supreme Love to G O D.*



WHY, O my God, must this mortal Structure put so great a Separation between my Soul and thee? I am surrounded with thy Essence, yet I cannot perceive thee; I follow thee, and trace thy Foot-steps in Heaven and Earth, yet I cannot overtake thee; thou art before me, and I cannot reach thee; and behind me, and I perceive thee not.

B

O

O THOU, whom unseen, I love, by what powerful Influence dost thou attract my Soul? The Eye has not seen, nor the Ear heard, nor has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, what thou art; and yet I love thee beyond all that mine Eye has seen, or my Ear heard, beyond all that my Heart can comprehend. Thou dwellest in Heights of Glory, to which no human Thought can soar, and yet thou art more near and intimate to my Soul than any of the Objects of Sense. These Ears have never heard thy Voice, and yet I am better acquainted with thee, and can rely on thee with more Confidence, than on the dearest Friend I have on Earth.

MY Heart cleaves to thee, O Lord, as its only Refuge, and finds in thee a secret and constant Spring of Consolation. I speak to thee with the utmost Confidence, and think thy Being my greatest Happiness. The Reflection on thy Existence and Greatness recreates my Spirits, and fills my Heart with Alacrity; my Soul overflows with Pleasure, I rejoice, I triumph in thy independant Blessedness, and absolute Dominion. Reign, O my God, for ever, glorious and uncontroul'd.

I, a Worm of the Earth, would join my Assent with the infinite Orders above, with
all

I. *of the* HEART. 35

all thy flaming Ministers who rejoice in thy Kingdom and Glory.

*Tho' not with them, thy happier Race, allow'd
To view the bright unveil'd Divinity;
(By no audacious Glance from mortal Eyes,
Those mystick Glories are to be profan'd)
But yet I feel the same immortal Flame,
And love thee, tho' unseen.*

I LOVE thee——Thus far I can speak, but all the rest is unutterable; and I must leave the pleasing Tale untold till I can talk in the Language of Immortality: and then I'll begin the transporting Story, which shall never come to an End, but be still and still beginning: for thy Beauties, O thou fairest of ten thousand, will still be new, and shall kindle fresh Ardor in my Soul to all Eternity. The sacred Flame shall rise, nor find any Limits till thy Perfections find a Period.

I LOVE thee, and O thou that knowest all things, read the Characters that Love has drawn on my Heart: What Excellence but thine in Heaven and Earth could raise such Aspirations of Soul, such sublime and fervent Affections as those I feel? What could

fix my Spirit but boundless Perfection? What is there else for whose sake I could despise all created Glory? why am I not at rest here among sensible Enjoyments? Whence arise these importunate Longings, these infinite Desires? Why does not the compleat Creation satisfy, or at least delude me with a Dream of Happiness? Why do not the Objects of Sense awake a more ardent Sentiment than things distant and invisible? Why should I, who *say to Corruption, Thou art my Father*, aspire after a Union with the immense Divinity?

You Angels of God, that behold his Face, explain to me the sacred Mystery; tell me how this heavenly Flame began, unriddle its wondrous Generation: Who hath animated this mortal Flame with celestial Fire, and given a Clod of Earth this divine Ambition? What could kindle it but the Breath of God, which kindled up my Soul? And to thee, its amiable Original, it ascends; it breaks through all created Perfection, and keeps on its restless Course to the first Pattern of Beauty.

YE flow'ry Varieties of the Earth, and you sparkling Glories of the Skies, your Blandishments are vain, while I pursue an Excellence

cellence that casts a Reproach on all your Glory. I would fain close my Eyes on all the various and lovely Appearances you present, and would open them on a brighter Scene. I have Desires which nothing visible can gratify; to which no material things are suitable. O when shall I find Objects more entirely agreeable to my intellectual Faculties? My Soul springs forward in pursuit of a distant Good, whom I follow by some faint Ray of Light, which only glimmers by short Intervals before me. Oh when will it disperse the Clouds, and break out in full Splendor on my Soul?

BUT what will the open Vision of thy Beauties effect, if while thou art but faintly imagin'd, I love thee with such a sacred Fervour? To what blessed Heights shall my Admiration rise, when I shall behold thee in full Perfection; when I shall see thee as thou art exalted in Majesty, and compleat in Beauty? How shall I triumph then in thy Glory, and in the Privileges of my own Being? What ineffable Thoughts will rise to find myself united to the all-sufficient Divinity, by Ties which the Sons of Men have no Names to express, by an Engagement that the Revolution of eternal Years shall not dissolve?

The League of Nature shall be broken, and the Laws of the mingled Elements be cancell'd; but my Relation to the Almighty God shall stand fix'd and unchangeable as his own Existence: *Nor Life, nor Death, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever separate me from his Love.*

TRIUMPH, O my Soul, and rejoice; look forward beyond the Period of all terrestrial things: Look beyond ten thousand Ages of celestial Blessedness, look forward still, and take an immeasurable Prospect; press on and leave unnumber'd Ages behind, Ages of ineffable Peace and Pleasure; plunge at once into the Ocean of Bliss, and call Eternity itself thy own.

THERE are no Limits to the Prospect of my Joy; it runs parallel with the Duration of the infinite Divinity: My Bliss is without bounds; O when shall the full Possession of it commence?

II. *The Truth and Goodness of* GOD.

*EN*grav'd as in eternal Brass,
 The mighty Promise shines ;
Nor can the Powers of Darkneſs raze
 Thoſe everlaſting Lines.

The ſacred Word of Grace is ſtrong
 As that which built the Skies ;
The Voice that rolls the Stars along
 Speaks all the Promiſes.

AND they all are built on the immutable Truth and Goodneſs of thy Nature: Thou doſt not ſpeak at random like vain Man ; but whatever thou haſt engag'd to perform, is the Reſult of eternal Counſel and Deſign. Thou haſt utter'd nothing that thou can'ſt ſee occaſion to alter on a ſecond Review : Thou canſt promiſe nothing to thy own Damage, nor be a Loſer by the utmoſt Liberality. Thou art every way qualified to make good thy Engagements by the Fulneſs of thy Riches and Power.

NOR haſt thou any Neceſſity to flatter thy Creatures, or to ſay kinder things to them than

thou meanest to fulfil. Miserable Man can bring no Advantage to thee, nor has he any thing to claim from thee. By what Benefit has he prevented thee? By what Right can he demand the least of thy Favours? Thy Engagements are all free and unconstrain'd, founded on thy own Beneficence, and not on the Merits of thy Creature. While I consider this, my Expectations rise, I set no Limits to my Hopes: I look up with Confidence, and call thee *my Father*; and with a humble Faith, I claim every Advantage that tender Name imports. My Heart confides in thee with Stedfastness and Alacrity; Fear and Distrust are inconsistent with my Thoughts of the Beneficence of thy Nature.

EVERY Name and Attribute by which thou hast reveal'd thyself to Man, confirms my Faith. Thy Life, thy Being is engaged: I may as well question thy Existence, as thy Faithfulness: As sure as thou art, thou art just and true. The Protestations of the most faithful Friend I have, cannot give me half the Consolation that thy Promises give me. I hear vain Man with Diffidence, I bid my Soul beware of trusting false Mortality;
but

III. *of the* HEART. 41

but I hear thy Voice with Joy and full Assurance.

THY Words are not writ in Sand, nor scatter'd by the fleeting Winds; but shall stand in force when Heaven and Earth shall be no more. Eternal Ages shall not diminish their Efficacy, nor alter what the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken. I believe, I believe with the most perfect Assent: I know that *thou art, and that thou art a Rewarder of them that diligently seek thee*; I feel the Evidence, for thou hast not left thyself without Witness in my Heart.



III. *Longing after the Enjoyment* *of* GOD.

MY God, to thee my Sighs ascend, every Complaint I make, ends with thy Name: I pause, I dwell on the Sound, I speak it over again, and find that all my Cares begin and end in thee. I long to behold the supreme Beauty, I pant for the fair Original of all that is lovely, for Beauty that is yet unknown, and for intellectual Pleasures yet untasted.

MY

MY Heart aspires, my Wishes fly beyond the Bounds of Creation, and despise all that Mortality can present me with. I was form'd for celestial Joys, and find myself capable of the Entertainments of Angels. Why may I not begin my Heaven below, and taste at least of the Springs of Pleasure that flow from thy Right-hand for ever?

SHOULD I drink my fill, those Fountains are still exhaustless; Millions of happy Souls quench their infinite Desires there: Millions of happy Orders of Beings gaze on thy Beauty, and are made Partakers of thy Blessedness; but thou art still undiminish'd. No Liberality can waste the Store of thy Perfection; it has flow'd from Eternity, and runs for ever fresh, and why must I perish for Want?

MY thirsty Soul pines for the Waters of Life: Oh! who will refresh me with the pleasurable Draught? How long shall I wander in this desert Land, where every Prospect is waste and barren? I look round me in vain, and sigh still unsatisfy'd: Oh! who will lead me to the still Waters, and make me repose in green Pastures, where the Weary are for ever at rest? How tedious are the Hours of Expectation?

Come,

*Come, Lord, my Head doth burn, my Heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay;
Thy long deferring wounds me to the Quick,
My Spirit gaspeth Night and Day:
O shew thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.*

DISPATCH thy Commissions; give me my Work, and Activity to perform it, and let me as a Hireling fulfil my Day. Lord, 'tis enough: *What am I better than my Fathers?* they are dead, and I am mortal.

*I'm but a Stranger and a Pilgrim here
In these wild Regions, wand'ring and forlorn;
Restless and sighing for my native Home,
Longing to reach my weary Space of Life,
And to fulfil my Task. Oh! hast the Hour
Of Joy and sweet Repose. Transporting Hope!*

LORD, here I am waiting for thy Commands, attending thy Pleasure; O speak and incline my Ear to hear; give me my Work, let me finish it, and gain my Dismissal from this Body of Sin and Death; this hated Clog of Error and Guilt, of Corruption and Vanity.
Oh!

44 *Devout* EXERCISES III.

Oh! let me drop this Load, and bid these Scenes of Guilt a final Adieu.

I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord; when wilt thou let me into thy holy Habitation? How long shall I pine at this Distance from thee? What can I speak to shew thee my Pain, to utter my Anguish, when I fear the Loss of my God? Oh! speak an assuring Word, and confirm my Hope.

Transporting Moment! when wilt thou appear, To crown my Hopes, and banish all my Fear?

AGAIN, O my Father, and my eternal Friend, I breathe out my Requests to thee in this Land of Fatigue and Folly! What is this Life but a sorry tiresome Round, a Circle of repeated Vanities? Happiness has been never seen in it since Sin and Folly enter'd: All is empty Appearance, or vain Labour, or painful Vexation.

Suffic'd with Life, my languid Spirits faint, And fain would be at rest. Oh! let me enter Those sacred Seats, and after all the Toil Of Life, begin an everlasting Sabbath.

YET again, O Lord, I ask leave to tell thee, I have waited for thy Salvation, and
hourly

IV. *of the* HEART. 45

hourly languish'd after the Habitations of my God. My Heart grows sick, and I almost expire under these Delays: What have I here to keep me from thee? What to relieve the tedious Hours of Absence? I have pronounc'd all below the Sun, Vanity and Vexation, all insipid and burthensome. Amidst Health and Plenty, Friends and Reputation, thou art my only Joy, my highest Wish, and my supreme Delight. On thee my Soul fixes all her Hopes; there I rest in a celestial Calm! Oh! let it not be broken with earthly Objects; let me live unmolested with the Cares or Delights of Sense.

*Oh! let me flee
From all the World, and live alone to THEE.*



IV. GOD *my supreme, my only
Hope.*

WHY do I address thee, my God, with no more Confidence? Why do I indulge these Remains of Unbelief, and harbour these Returns of Infidelity and Distrust?
Can

Can I survey the Earth, can I gaze on the Structure of the Heavens, and ask if thou art able to deliver? Can I call in question thy Ability to succour me, when I consider the general and particular Instances of thy Goodness and Power? One Age to another, in long Succession, hath convey'd the Records of thy Glory; *In all Generations thou hast been our Dwelling-place, my Fathers trusted in thee, and were deliver'd.* They have encouraged me, my own Experience has encourag'd me to trust in thee for ever.

THE Sun may fail to rise, and Men in vain expect its Light; but thy Truth, thy Faithfulness cannot fail: The Course of Nature may be revers'd, and all be Chaos again; but thou art immutable, and can'st not by any Change deceive the Hopes of them that trust in thee. I adore thy Power, and subscribe to thy Goodness and Fidelity, and what farther Objection would my Unbelief raise? Is any thing too hard for God to accomplish? Can the united Force of Earth and Hell resist his Will?

Great God, how wide thy Glories shine!

How broad thy Kingdom, how divine!

*Nature and Miracle, and Fate and Chance
are thine.*

THERE-

THEREFORE I apply myself immediately to thee, and renounce all the Terror and all the Confidence that may arise from Heaven or Earth besides.

*Not from the Dust my Joys or Sorrows spring :
Let all the baleful Planets shed
Their mingled Curses round my Head ;
Their mingled Curses I despise,
Let but the great, th' eternal King,
Look thro' the Clouds, and blefs me with his Eyes.*

LET him blefs me, and I shall be blefs'd ; blefs'd without Reserve or Limitation ; blefs'd in my going out, and coming in ; in my sitting down, and rising up ; blefs'd in Time, and blefs'd to all Eternity. That Blessing from thy Lips will influence the whole Creation, and attend me wherever I am. It shall go before me as a leading Light, and follow me as my protecting Angel. When I lie down, it will cover me, I shall rest beneath the Shadow of the Most High, and dwell safely in the Secrets of his Tabernacle.

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THY

THY Kingdom ruleth over all, O Lord, and thou dost according to thy Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth : I confess and acknowledge thy Providence. The ways of Man are not at his own disposal, but all his Goings are order'd by thee ; all Events are in thy Hands, and thou only canst succeed or disappoint his Hopes. If thou blow on his Designs, they are for ever blasted ; if thou bless them, neither Earth nor Hell can hinder their Success : Therefore I apply myself immediately to thee ; for not all created Power can assist me without thee.

*Hence from my Heart, ye Idols, flee,
Ye sounding Names of Vanity !
No more my Tongue shall sacrifice
To Chance and Nature, Tales and Lies ;
Creatures without a God can yield me no
Supplies.*

NOT all the Power of Men on Earth, nor Angel, nor Saint in Heaven, can help or relieve me in the least Exigence, if my God hide himself and stand afar off from me. Second Causes are all at thy Direction, and cannot aid me till commission'd by thee.

Lord,

*Lord, when my thoughtful Soul surveys
Fire, Air and Earth, and Stars and Seas;
I call them all thy Slaves;
Commission'd by my Father's Will,
Poison shall cure, or Balms shall kill;
Vernal Suns, or Zephyrs breath
May burn or blast the Plants to Death
That sharp December saves.
What can Winds or Planets boast,
But a precarious Power?
The Sun is all in Darkness lost,
Frost shall be Fire, and Fire be Frost,
When he appoints the Hour.*

AT thy Command Nature and Necessity are no more; all things are alike easy to a God: Speak but thou the Word, and my Desires are granted: Say, *Let there be Light*, and there shall be Light. Thou canst look me into Peace, when the Tumult of Thoughts raise a Storm within. Bid my Soul be still, and all its Tempest shall obey thee.

I DEPEND only on thee; do thou smile, and all the World may frown: Do thou succeed my Affairs, and I shall fear no Obstacle that Earth or Hell can put in my way.

C

Thou

Thou only art the Object of my Fear, and all my Desires are directed to thee.

HUMAN Things have lost their Being and their Names, and vanish into nothing before thee; they are but Shades and Disguises to veil the active Divinity. Oh! let me break thro' all these Separations, and see and confess the great, the governing Cause. Let no Appearance of created things, however specious, hide thee from my View: Let me look thro' all to thee, nor cast a Glance of Love or Hope below thee. With a holy Contempt let me survey the ample Round of the Creation, as lying in the Hollow of thy Hand, and every Being in Heaven and on Earth as unmoveable by the most potent Cause in Nature, till commission'd by thee to do me Good or Hurt. Oh! let thy Hand be with me to keep me from Evil, and let me abide under the Shadow of the Almighty: I shall be secure in thy Pavilion. To thee I fly for Shelter from all the Ills of Mortality.

V. GOD *a present Help, and ever
near.*

THOU wast found of me, O my God, when I sought thee not, and wilt thou fly me when I seek thee? Am I giving my Breath to the Wind, and scattering my Petitions in the Air? Is it a vain thing to call upon God? and is there no Profit in crying to the Almighty? *Art thou a God afar off, and not near at Hand?* Is there any Place exempt from thy Presence? any Distance whence my Cries cannot reach thee! Can any Darkness hide me from thy Eyes? or is there a Corner of the Creation unvisited by thee? Dost thou not fill Heaven and Earth, and am I not surrounded by thy Immensity?

ARE my Desires unknown to thee? or is there a Thought in my Heart conceal'd from thee? Dost not thou that hast form'd the Ear, hear? Canst thou forget the Work of thy own Hands? Or retir'd far in the Heavens, full of thy own Happiness, canst thou leave thy Creation to Misery and Disorder, helpless and hopeless? Are the Ways of Man at his own Disposal, and his Paths

undirected by thee? Is calling on the living God no more than worshipping a dumb Idol? Canst thou, like them, disappoint and mock thy Adorers?

ART thou unacquainted with the Extent of thy own Power, that thou shouldst promise beyond thy Ability to perform? Or art thou *as a Man, that shouldst lie; or the Son of Man, that shouldst repent?* Is thy Faithfulness uncertain, and thy Power precarious? Are those Perfections imaginary for which Men adore thee, and thy gracious Names insignificant Titles? Do the *Children of Men* in vain *put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings?* Art not thou *a present Help in the Time of Trouble*, and is there no Security in the secret Places of the Most High? Whither then shall I look in my Distress? To whom shall I direct my Prayer? From whom shall I expect Relief, if there is no Help in God for me?

BUT, Oh! what Unrighteousness have my Fathers ever found in thee? What Injustice can I charge thee with? What Breach of Truth, or Want of Pity? Have the Records of thy Actions ever been stain'd with the Breach of Faithfulness? Art thou not my only Hope, and my long-experienc'd
Sup-

VI. *of the* H E A R T. 53

Support? Have I ever found Help from the
Creatures when thou hast fail'd me? Have I,
or can I have, a greater Certainty than thy
Word to depend on? Can any other Power
defend or deliver like thee? Thou art *a*
Rock, and thy Work is perfect, for all thy
Ways are Judgment: A God of Truth, and
without Iniquity, just and right art thou.
With my last Breath I will witness to thy
Truth and Faithfulness, and declare thy Good-
ness to the Children of Men,



VI. *God an All-sufficient Good, and
my only Happiness.*

WHY is my Heart so far from thee,
My God, my chief Delight?
Why are my Thoughts no more by Day
With thee, no more by Night?

Why should my foolish Passions rove?
Where can such Sweetness be
As I have tasted in thy Love,
As I have found in thee?

WHERE can I hope to meet such Joys as thy Smiles have given me? Where can I find Pleasure so sincere and unallay'd? When I have enjoy'd the Light of thy Countenance, and the Sense of thy Love, has not all my Soul been fill'd? Have I found any Want or Emptiness? Has there been any Room left for Desire, or any Prospect beyond, besides the more perfect Enjoyment of my God? Have not all the Glories of the World been darkned, and turn'd into Blackness and Deformity? How poor how contemptible have they appear'd? Or rather have they not all disappear'd and vanish'd as Dreams and Shadows in the Noon of Day, and under the Blaze of Sun-beams?

I HAVE never found Satisfaction in any thing but in God; why then do I wander from him? why do I leave the Fountain of living Water for broken Cisterns? why do I abandon the full Ocean in search of shallow Streams? What Account can I give for Folly like this? I can promise myself nothing from the Creature; those Expectations shall deceive me no more. 'Tis thou, my God, thou art the only Object of my Hopes and Desires; 'tis thou only that canst make me happy.

VI. *of the* H E A R T. 55

I F thou frown, my Being is a Curse:
Thy Indignation is Hell with all its Terrors.
Let me never feel that, and I defy all things
else to make me miserable. I seem independant
on all Nature, to thee only I apply myself.
Hear me, thou beneficent Author of
my Being, thou Support of my Life, to thee
I direct my Wishes, those Desires which thou
wilt approve, while I ask but the Happiness
I was created to enjoy. Oh! fix all my Expectation
on thee, and free me from this Levity
and Inconstancy.

*Look gently down, Almighty Grace,
Prison me round in thy Embrace;
Pity the Heart that would be thine,
And let thy Power my Love confine.*

SUFFER me never to start from thee; such
a Confinement were sweeter than Liberty:
Thy Yoke is easy, and thy Burden light. I
shall bless the Chain that binds me to thee.
Oh! give me such a View of thy Beauty as
shall fix my volatile Heart for ever; such a
View as shall determine all its Motions, and
be a constant Conviction how unreasonable
it is to wander from thee.

Is it that I relish any thing beyond thy Love? Oh! no. I appeal even to thee, who canst not be deceiv'd, and knowest the inmost Secrets of my Soul: Thou knowest where the Balance of my Love falls, and that my Wandrings are not deliberate; that 'tis not by Choice that I forsake thee. I grieve, I sigh for my Folly; shouldst thou forgive me, I can never forgive myself, for I know 'tis inexcusable.

I WANT nothing when I am possess'd of thee; without thee I want all things. Thou art the Centre of all my Passions; I have no Hope but what is thine, no Joy but what flows from thee: my greatest Fears are those of losing thee; my inmost Care is to secure thy Favour. This is the Subject of my deepest Anxiety: Every Sigh I breathe ends in thy Name, and that lov'd Name alone allays every Anguish of my Soul, and calms its wildest Tempests.

FROM thy Frowns or Favour all my Joys or Sorrows spring; thy Frowns can make me infinitely miserable, thy Favour can make me infinitely blessed. I can defy Hell, and smile in the Face of Death, whilst I can call thee *mine*. My God! still let me bless the Sound, and part with all things rather than renounce

VII. *of the* HEART. 57

nounce my Propriety in thee: Let me hold it to my last Breath, and claim it with my expiring Sighs.

SECURE of thee nothing can terrify my Soul; all is peaceable and serene within, eternal Love and immortal Pleasure: I desire no more; Imagination stops here, and all my Wishes are lost in eternal Plenty.—MY GOD! more cannot be asked, and with less I should be infinitely miserable. The Kingdoms of the Skies should not buy my Title to thee and thy Love: The Blessedness of all Creatures is complete here, for God himself is blessed in himself for ever.

*What can I add, for all my Words are faint,
Celestial Love no Eloquence can paint?
No more can be in mortal Sounds express'd,
But vast Eternity shall tell the rest.*



VII. *A Covenant with* GOD.

INcomprehensible Being, who *searchest the Heart, and triest the Reins of the Children of Men*, thou knowest my Sincerity, and my Thoughts are all unveiled to thee;

thee: I am furrounded with thine Immenfity; thou art a prefent, tho' invifible Witnefs of the folemn Affair I am now engaged in. I am now *taking bold of thy Strength that I may make Peace with thee*, and entring into Articles with the Almighty God: Thefe are the happy Days long fince predicted, when *one fhall fay, I am the Lord's, and another fhall call himfelf by the Name of Ifrael, and another fhall fubfcribe with his Hand to the Lord; and I will be their God, and they fhall be my Sons and my Daughters, faith the Lord Jehovah.*

WITH the moft thankful Sincerity I take hold on this Covenant, as 'tis more fully manifested and explained in thy Gospel by *Jefus Chrift*; and humbly accepting thy Propofals, I bind myfelf to thee by a facred and everlafting Obligation. By a free and deliberate Action, I do here ratify the Articles which were made for me in my Baptifm into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; I religiously devout myfelf to thy Service, and entirely fubmit to thy Conduct. I renounce the Glories and Vanities of the World, and chufe thee as my Happinefs, my fupreme Felicity and everlafting Portion. I make no Article with thee for any thing
befides:

besides: Deny or give me what thou wilt, I will never repine while my principal Treasure is secure. This is my deliberate, my free and sincere Determination; a Determination, which, by thy Grace, I will never retract.

OH! thou, by whose Power alone I shall be able to stand, *Put thy Fear in my Heart, that I may never depart from thee*: Let not the World, with all its Flatteries; nor Death, nor Hell, with all their Terrors, force me to violate this sacred Vow. Oh! let me never live to abandon thee, nor draw the impious Breath that would deny thee.

AND now let surrounding Angels witness for me, that I solemnly devout all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul to thy Service; and when I presumptuously employ any of the Advantages thou hast given me, to thy Dishonour, let them testify against me, and let my own Words condemn me.

ELIZABETH ROWE.

THUS have I subscrib'd to thy gracious Proposals, and engag'd my self to be the Lord's: And now let the Malice of Men, and the Rage of Devils, combine against me, I can defy all their Stratagems; for *God* himself

60 *Devout* EXERCISES VIII.

self is become my Friend, *Jefus* is my all-sufficient Saviour, and the *Spirit of God*, I trust, will be my Sanctifier and my Comforter.

O HAPPY Day! transporting Moment! The brightest Period of my Life! Heaven with all its Light smiles on thee: What glorious Mortal can now excite my Envy? What Scene to tempt my Ambition could the whole Creation display? Let Glory call me with her exalted Voice; let Pleasure, with a softer Eloquence, allure me; the World in all its Splendour appears but a Trifle, while the infinite God is my Portion. He is mine by as sure a Title as eternal Veracity can confer: The Right is unquestionable, the Conveyance unalterable. The Mountains shall be remov'd, and the Hills be dissolv'd, before the everlasting Obligation shall be cancell'd.

VIII. *A Thank-Offering for saving Grace.*

*B*Less the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name: Bless the Lord, and forget not all his Benefits, who redeemeth

VIII. *of the* HEART. 61

deemeth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with Loving-kindness, and tender Mercy ; who brought thee out of the Mire and Clay, and set thy Feet upon a Rock ; who broke thy Fetters, and freed thee from the miserable Bondage of Sin. I lay, a wretched Slave, pleas'd with my Chains, and fond of my Captivity, fatally deluded and undone, till Love, almighty Love, rescued me. Blest Effect of unmerited Grace ! I shall stand for ever an illustrious Instance of boundless Mercy : To that I must entirely ascribe my Salvation, and thro' all the Ages of Eternity I'll rehearse the Wonders of redeeming Love, and tell to listening Angels what it has done for my Soul.

*I'll sing the endless Miracles of Love ;
For ever that my lofty Theme shall prove.*

MY glorious Creator, why did I employ thy Thoughts before I had a Being ? Why from all Eternity was an Immortality designed me, and my Birth allotted me in a Land illuminated with the Rays of sacred Light ? I might have been invoking the Powers of Hell with detestable Ceremonies, instead of adoring the omnipotent God. But when
thousands

thousands are lost in these Delusions, why am I thus graciously distinguish'd? Instead of being born among the shameful Vices of impious Parents, and an Heir to their Curses, why am I entitled to the Blessing of religious Ancestors? Why, when I was incapable of Choice, was I devoted to the God that *keeps Covenant and Mercy to a thousand Generations of them that fear him?*

WHY, when I knew thee not, didst thou sustain me? But oh! why, when I knew thee, and rebell'd against thee, why didst thou so long suffer my Ingratitude? Why did thy watchful Providence perpetually surround me, crossing all the Methods I took to undo myself? Why was I not curst with my own Wishes, and left to the quiet Possession of those Vanities I delighted in; those Toys which I foolishly prefer'd to all the Treasures of thy Love? Why didst thou pursue me with the Offers of thy Favour when I fled thee with such Aversion; and had fled thee for ever, if thou hadst not compell'd me to return?

WHY did thy Spirit strive so long with an obstinate Heart, which resisted all its Motions, and turn'd thy Patience and Long-Suffering into Provocation and Guilt? Why am I not undone by those pleasing Snares in which I

have

VIII. *of the* HEART. 63

have seen so many deluded Wretches perish? Like them I despise the unfearchable Riches of thy Grace; with them I had been content to share the sorry Portion and Pleasures of this World, if thou had'st let me alone, and I should never have enquired after thee; but why wast thou found of one that sought thee not? O why, but *because thou wilt be merciful to whom thou wilt be merciful?*

THEREFORE again with Astonishment and Delight I look back on the Methods of thy Grace; and again I consider myself lost in an Abyfs of Sin and Misery; when there was no Eye to pity me, no Hand but thine to assist me, thou madest it then the Time of Love. Never was Grace more free and surprizing than thine is; never was there a more obstinate Heart than mine; and never such unconquerable Love as thine. How gloriously has it triumph'd over my rebellious Faculties? How freely has it cancell'd all my Guilt?

COULD I have made the least Pretence to Merit, or have challeng'd any thing from thee, the Benefit had been less exalted; had there been any Foundation for human Pride, my corrupt Heart would soon have taken the Advantage, and have robb'd thee of thy Honour,

64 *Devout* EXERCISES VIII.

nour, by ascribing the glorious Work to the Strength of my own Reason, or a natural Tendency to Virtue; but here my Vanity is for ever silenc'd. I am lost in the boundless Abyss. O Height! O Depth! O Length and Breadth immeasurable! *How unsearchable are thy Ways, Almighty Love, and thy Paths past finding out?*

LET me here begin my eternal Song, and ascribe *Salvation and Honour*, Dominion and Majesty, *to him that sits on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever*, who has lov'd me, and ransom'd me with his Blood; ransom'd me from a voluntary Bondage, from the most vile and hopeless Captivity, a Captivity from which nothing but that unvaluable Purchase could have redeem'd me.

“ *Infinite Love! Almighty Grace?*

“ *Stand in amaze, ye rolling Skies:*

Bring hither your celestial Harps, ye beneficent Beings, who amidst the Height of your Happiness express a kind Regard for Man: Teach me the Language of Paradise, the Strains of Immortality. But oh! 'tis all too feeble, the Tongues of Seraphim cannot utter what I owe my Redeemer: From
what

IX. *of the* HEART. 65

what Misery, my adorable Saviour, hast thou rescued me? From Error, from Sin, from Snares and Death, from infernal Chains, eternal Horror, and the Blackness of Darkness for ever.

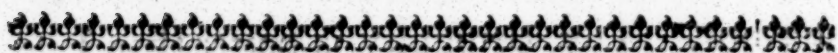
NOR here my glorious Benefactor stay'd; but still went on to magnify the Riches of his Grace, and entitled me to an endless Inheritance, and an immortal Crown; to the Fruition of God, and the unutterable Joys that flow from his Presence.

Mysterious Depths of boundless Love

My Admiration raise:

O God, thy Name exalted stands

Above my highest Praise.



IX. *Evidence of sincere Love to*
GOD.

IF I love thee not, my blessed God, I know not what I love: If I am uncertain of this, I am uncertain of my Existence: If I love thee not, what is the Meaning of these pathetick Expressions, MY GOD, MY ALL!

D

thou

thou Spring of my Life, and Fountain of my Happiness! my great Reward, and my exceeding Joy! the eternal Object of my Love, and supreme Felicity of my Nature! Does not my Heart attend my Lips in all this Language? How can this be, if my Soul does not love thee?

O MY God, if I love thee not, what is the Meaning of this constant Uneasiness at thy Absence? From whence proceeds this painful Anxiety of Mind about thy Love, and all these intense, these restless Desires after thee? Why are all the Satisfactions of Life insipid without thee? Without my God what are Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures to me? I should esteem the Possession of the World but a Trifle, or rather my eternal Damage, if it must be purchased with the Loss of thy Favour. Thy Benignity is better than Life, and the Moments in which I enjoy a Sense of thy Love, are the only happy Intervals of my Life. 'Tis then I live; 'tis then I am truly blest'd: 'Tis then I look down with Contempt on the little Amusements of the World, and pity them that want a Taste for these exalted Pleasures.

How calm, how peaceful in those Seasons are all the Regions of my Soul! I have
enough,

IX. *of the* HEART. 67

enough, I ask no more. Can they languish for the Stream, who drink at the overflowing Fountain? I have all the World and more, I have Heaven itself in thee: In thee I am completely and securely blest'd, and can defy the Malice of Earth and Hell to shake the Foundation of my Happiness, while thou dost whisper thy Love to my Soul. O blessed Stability of Heart! O sublime Satisfaction! Hast thou not told me that thou art mine by an inviolable Engagement, when my Soul devoted itself sincerely to thee? Does not thy Word assure me, *that the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be remov'd; but thy Kindness shall not depart, nor the Covenant of thy Peace be broken?*

HAST not thou terminated my Wishes, O Lord, in thyself, and fix'd my wandering Desires? Is it for Riches or Honour, for Length of Days, or Pleasure, that I follow thee with daily Importunities? Thou knowest these are not the Subject of my restless Petitions: Do I ever balance these Toys with thy Favour? Oh no: One Smile of thine obscures all their Glory. When thou dost bless my retir'd Devotions with thy Presence, I can wink all created Beauty into Blackness. When I meet thee in my solitary Contemplations, with

what Contempt do I look back on the lessening World.

*How dazzling is thy Beauty ! how divine !
How dim the Lustre of the World to thine !*

How dull are its Entertainments to the Pleasure of conversing with thee ? Oh stay, in those happy Moments, cries my satisfy'd Soul

*Stay, my Beloved, with me here ;
Stay till the Morning-star appear ;
Stay till the dusky Shadows fly
Before the Day's illustrious Eye.*

OH ! stay till the gloomy Night of Life is past, and Eternity dawn on my Soul. There's nothing in this barren Place to entertain me when thou art gone : I can relish nothing below after these celestial Banquets.

IF I love thee not, what's the meaning of this Impatience to be with thee ? *My Soul longeth, yea, fainteth, for the Courts of the Lord ; when shall I come and appear before thee ? Oh ! that I had the Wings of a Dove ; for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*

X. *Assu-*

X. *Assurances of Salvation in*
CHRIST JESUS.

I HAVE put my Treasure, my immortal Part, into thy Hands, Oh! my dear Redeemer, and *shall the Prey be taken from the Mighty?* Shall a Soul consecrated to thee fall a Sacrifice to Hell?

BLESSED God, am I not thine? and shall the Temple of thy Spirit be profan'd, and the Lips that have so often ascrib'd Dominion, and Glory, and Majesty to thee, be defil'd with infernal Blasphemy, and the Execrations of the Damn'd? Shall the Sparks of divine Love be extinguish'd, and immortal Enmity succeed? And shall I, who was once blest'd with thy Favour, become the Object of thy Wrath and Indignation? Shall all the mighty things thou hast done for my Soul be forgotten? Shall all my Vows, and thy own sacred Engagements be cancell'd? 'Tis all impossible; for *thou art not as Man, that thou shouldst lie; nor as the Son of Man, that thou shouldst repent.*

THOU art engag'd by thy own tremendous Name for my Security: My God, and my Father's God, from Generation to Generation thou hast been our Dwelling-place. I was

devoted to thee in Baptism by the solemn Vows of my religious Parents: My Infant Hands were early lifted up to thee, and I soon learned to know and acknowledge the God of my Fathers. I have actually subscrib'd with my Hand to the Lord, and am thine by the most voluntary and deliberate Obligations. The Portion of *Jacob* is my joyful Choice, nor need I fear losing it while thy Word is establish'd as the Heavens.

*The Lord, who made Heaven, Earth and Sea,
And all that they contain,
Will never quit his steadfast Truth,
Nor make his Promise vain.*

WERE my Dependance on myself, I were undone: The first Temptation would shake my Resolutions; I should sell the inestimable Riches of thy Love for a Trifle, and fool away immortal Pleasures for the Joys of a Moment; a specious Delusion would seduce me from all my Hopes of a glorious Futurity I shall fall a Victim to my own Folly, and must inevitably perish, if thou forsake me: But the Strength of *Israel* is my Hope, the Mighty One of *Jacob* my Defence.

THOU art the Rock of Ages; the fix'd and immutable Divinity is my high Tower
and

and my Refuge, my Redeemer, and Almighty Saviour. These were the blest'd, the glorious Titles by which thou didst at first assure my doubtful Soul : These were the transporting Names I knew and call'd thee by ; and thou hast answered them through all the Changes of my Life.

I WAS thy early Care ; thou didst support my helpless Infancy, and art the watchful Guide of my unsteady Youth. Which Way soever I turn, I meet thy Mercy, and trace thy Providence ; and as long as I live I will record thy Benefits, and depend on thy Truth ; those Benefits which have constantly pursued me, and that Truth which has never deceived me, and is engag'd never to abandon me. Transporting Assurance ! What further Security can I ask ? What Security can I wish beyond eternal Veracity ? *The Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be remov'd, but thy Kindness shall not depart, nor the Covenant of thy Peace be broken ;* that Covenant which has been seal'd by the Blood of the Son of God, and in that Holy Sacrament I have receiv'd the Pledges of thy Love. Thou didst graciously invite me into that Communion, and meet me there with the most unmerited Favour.

FEAR not, say'st thou, poor trembling Soul, for I am thy Redeemer and thy mighty Saviour, the Hope of *Israel*, and in my Name shall all the Nations of the Earth be blest'd: *I am gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth*: These are the Titles by which I have reveal'd myself to Men; I came the expected *Messiah*, the Star of *Jacob*, and the Glory of the *Gentiles*. I came from the Fulness of ineffable Glory, in the Form of Man, to redeem the Race of *Adam*. I am willing and able to save, and *whosoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast away*. Fear not, I had kind Designs towards thee from Eternity; and by these visible Sign of my Body and Blood, I seal my Love to thy Soul: Take here the Pledges of Heaven, the Assurances of everlasting Happiness.

'Tis enough, reply'd my transported Soul; divide the World as thou wilt, let others unenvy'd share its Glory; thy Love is all I crave. I am blest'd with that Assurance, I am surrounded with the Joys of Paradise; every Place is a Heaven, while my Beloved is mine, and I am his.

If

*If all the Monarchs, whose Command supreme
Divides the wide Dominion of this Ball,
Should offer each his boasted Diadem,
I would not quit thy Favour for them all :
These Trifles with Contempt I would resign ;
The World's a Toy, while I can call thee MINE.*

LET God and Angels witness for me, that I renounce the World, and chuse thy Love as my Portion ; witness that I sacrifice my darling Sins to thee, and from this Moment solemnly devote myself to thy Service.

THUS did I engage myself to be the Lord's, and thus didst thou graciously condescend to seal the Privileges of the New Covenant to my Soul. And O let the solemn Transaction never be forgotten ; let it be writ in the Volumes of Eternity ; let it be engraven in the Books of unalterable Destiny : There let the sacred Articles stand recorded, and be had in everlasting Remembrance.

XI. *Thou art my God.*

O God, thou art my God ; thou art thy own Blessedness, the Centre of thy own Desires, and the boundless Spring of thy own Happiness. Thou art immutable, and infinitely perfect, and therein consists thy Blessedness and Glory : But that *thou art my God*, 'tis from thence flows all my Consolation : This glorious Privilege is my Dignity and Boast, *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee ; my Father's God, and I will exalt thee ; the Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted. Thy Bignity is better than Life, therefore my Lips shall praise thee.*

I HAVE all things in possessing thee ; I find no Want, no Emptiness within ; my Wishes are answer'd, and all my Desires appeas'd, when I believe my Title to thy Favour secure. Whatever Tempests arise, whatever Darknes surrounds me, yet *thou art my God* ; I cry, and the Storms are appeas'd, and the Darknes vanishes. I find my Expectations from the World disappointed, my Friends false, and human Dependance vain ; but still *thou art my God*, my unfailing Confidence, my Rock, my everlasting Inheritance.

Death

XI. *of the* HEART. 75

Death and Hell level their Darts against me ;
but with a heavenly Tranquillity I cry, *Thou*
art my God : I dwell on high, my Place of De-
fence is the Munition of Rocks.

My Hiding-place, my Refuge, Tower,
And Shield, art thou, O Lord :
I firmly anchor all my Hopes
On thy unerring Word.

WHILE thou art mine, what can I fear?
Can Omnipotence be vanquish'd : Can al-
mighty Strength be oppos'd ? When it can,
then, and not till then, shall I want Security ;
then, and not till then, shall my Confidence
be shaken, and my Hopes confounded.

Thou art my God : Let me again repeat the
glorious Accents, and hear the pleasurable
Sounds. Let me a thousand and a thousand
times repeat it ; 'tis Rapture all, and Harmo-
ny : The Harps of Angels and their Tongues,
what Notes more melodious could they sing or
play ? What but these transporting Words give
the Emphasis to all their Joys ? On this they
dwell ; 'tis their eternal Theme, *Thou art my God.*
Like me every Seraph boasts the glorious Pro-
priety, and owes his Happiness to those im-
portant Words : In them unbounded Joys are
compre-

comprehended, Paradise itself, all Heaven is here describ'd; all that is possible to be utter'd of celestial Blessedness is here contain'd.

*My God, my all-sufficient Good,
My Portion, and my Choice;
In thee my vast Desires are fill'd,
And all my Powers rejoice.*

MY God, my Triumph and my Glory, let others boast of what they will, and pride themselves in human Securities; let them place their Confidence in their Wealth, their Honour and their numerous Friends: I renounce all earthly Dependance, and glory only in my God.

*From him alone my Joys shall rise,
And run eternal Rounds,
Beyond the Limits of the Skies
And all created Bounds.*

WHEN Death shall remove all other Supports, and force me to quit my Title to the dearest Names below, in *my God* I shall have an unchangeable Propriety: That Engagement shall remain firm when I shall lose my Hold of all other Enjoyments; when all human
Things

Things vanish with an everlasting Flight, I shall bid them a joyful adieu, and breathe out my Soul with this triumphant Exclamation, *Thou art my God*, my Inheritance, my eternal Possession: Nor Death, nor Hell shall ever separate me from thy Love.

Thou art my God. Let me survey the Extent of my Blessedness: Let me take a Prospect of my vast Possession: Let me consider its Dimensions; O Height! O Depth! O Length and Breadth immeasurable; I have all that is worth possessing; *thou art my God.*

BUT what have I uttered? Is Mortality permitted to speak these daring Words? Can the Race of Man make such glorious Pretensions? Thou thyself canst give no more: Thou that art thy own Happiness, and the Spring of Joy to all thy Creatures; with thee are the Fountains of Pleasure, and in thy Presence is Fulness of Joy: Immortal Life and Happiness flow from thee, and they are necessarily blest who are surrounded with thy Favour; thou art their God, and *thou art my God* to everlasting Ages.

*Earth flies with all the Charms it has in store,
Its Snares and gay Temptations are no more.*

Creatures

*Creatures no more of Entity can boast, [lost.
The Streams, the Hills, and tow'ring Groves are
The Sun, the Stars, and the fair Fields of Light
Withdraw, and now are vanish'd from my Sight;
And God is all in all.*



XII. *Confession of Sin, with Hope of
Pardon.*

BREAK, break, insensible Heart! Let Confusion cover me, and Darknefs, black as my own Guilt, surround me. Lord, what a Monster am I become? How hateful to myself for offending thee? How much more detestable to thee, to thee against whom I have offended? Why have I provok'd the God on whom my Being every Moment depends? The God, who out of nothing advanc'd me to a reasonable and immortal Nature, and put me in a Capacity of being happy for ever? The God whose Goodness has run parallel with my Life; who has preserv'd me in a thousand Dangers, and kept me even from the Ruin I courted, and even while I repin'd at the Providence that saved me.

How

XII. *of the* H E A R T. 79

How often has he recover'd me from eternal Misery, and brought me back from the very Borders of Hell, when there was but a dying Groan, but one faint Sigh between me and everlasting Perdition? When all human Help fail'd, and my mournful Friends were taking their last Farewels; when every smiling Hope forsook me, and the Horrors of Death surrounded me, to God I cry'd from the Depths of Misery and Despair; I cry'd, and he was intreated, and rescued my Life from Destruction: He *brought me out of the miry Clay, and set my Feet upon a Rock.* A thousand Instances of thy Goodness could I recount, and all to my own Confusion.

COULD I consider thee as my Enemy, I might forgive myself; but when I consider thee as my best Friend, my tender Father, the Sustainer of my Life, and Author of my Happiness, good God! what a monstrous thing do I appear, who have sinned against thee? Could I charge thee with Severity, or call thy Laws rigorous and unjust, I had some Excuse; but I am silenc'd there by the Conviction of my own Reason, which assents to all thy Precepts as just and holy. But to heighten my Guilt, I have violated the sacred Rules
I ap-

I approve: I have provok'd the Justice I fear,
and offended the Purity I adore.

YET still there are higher Aggravations of my Iniquity; and what gives me the utmost Confusion is, that I have sinned against unbounded Love and Goodness: Horrid Ingratitude! here lies the Emphasis of my Folly and Misery; the Sense of this torments me, can I not say, as much as the Dread of Hell, or the Fears of losing Heaven? Thy Love and tender Compassion, the late pleasing Subjects of my Thoughts, are on this account become my Terror. The Titles of an Enemy and a Judge scarce sound more painful to my Ears, than those of a Friend and a Benefactor, which so shamefully enhance my Guilt: Those sacred Names confound and terrify my Soul, because they furnish my Conscience with the most exquisite Reproaches: The Thoughts of such Goodness abused, and such Clemency affronted, seem to me almost as insupportable, as those of thy Wrath and Severity.

O WHITHER shall I turn: I dare not look upward; the Sun and Stars upbraid me there: If I look downward, the Fields and Fountains take their Creator's Part, and Heaven and Earth conspire to aggravate my Sins: Those common Blessings tell me how much I
am

XII. *of the* HEART. 81

am indebted to thy Bounty: But, Lord, when I recal thy particular Favours, I am utterly confounded; what numerous Instances could I recount? Nor has my Rebellion yet shut up the Fountain of thy Grace; for yet I breathe, and yet I live, and live to implore a Pardon: Heaven is still open, and the Throne of God accessible. But oh! with what Confidence can I approach it? What Motives can I urge, but such as carry my own Condemnation in them?

SHALL I urge thy former Pity and Indulgence? This were to plead against myself: And yet thy Clemency, that Clemency which I have abus'd, is the best Argument I can bring; thy Grace and Clemency as revealed in JESUS, the Son of thy Love, the blessed Reconciler of God and Man.

O WHITHER has my Folly reduc'd me? with what Words shall I chuse to address thee? *Pardon my Iniquity, O Lord, for it is great:* Surprizing Argument! yet this will magnify thy Goodness, and yield me an eternal Theme to praise thee: 'twill add an Emphasis to all my grateful Songs, and tune my Harp to everlasting Harmony. The Ransom'd of the Lord shall join with me, while this glorious Instance of thy Grace excites their Wonder,

E

and

and my unbounded Gratitude: Thus shall thy Glory be exalted.

O LORD GOD, permit a poor worthless Creature to plead a little with thee; what Honour will my Destruction bring thee? what Profit, what Triumph to the Almighty will my Perdition be? Mercy is thy brightest Attribute; this gives thee all thy Loveliness, and completes thy Beauty. By Names of Kindness and Indulgence thou hast chosen to reveal thyself to Men: By Titles of the most tender Import thou hast made thyself known to my Soul; Titles which thou dost not yet disdain, but art still compassionate, and ready to pardon.

BUT that thou hast or wilt forgive me, O my God, aggravates my Guilt. And wilt thou indeed forgive me? wilt thou remit the gloomy Score, and restore the Privilege I have forfeited? Wondrous Love! astonishing Benignity! Let me never live to repeat my Ingratitude; let me never live to break my penitent Vows; let me die ere that unhappy Moment arrive.

XIII. *The Absence of GOD on Earth.*

WHAT is Hell? what is Damnation, but an Exclusion from thy Presence? 'Tis the Want of that which gives the Regions of Darkness all their Horror: What is Heaven? What are the Satisfactions of Angels, but the Views of thy Glory? What but thy Smiles and Complacence are the Springs of their immortal Transports?

WITHOUT the Light of thy Countenance, what Privilege is my Being? what canst thou thyself give me to countervail the infinite Loss? Could the Riches, the empty Glories and insipid Pleasures of the World, recompense me for it? Ah! no. Not all the Variety of the Creation could satisfy me while I am deprived of thee: Let the Ambitious, the Licentious and Covetous, share these Trifles among themselves; they are no Amusements for my dejected Thoughts.

THERE was a Time (but ah! that happy Time is pass'd, those blissful Minutes gone) when with a modest Assurance I could call thee *my Father, my almighty Friend, my Defence, my Hope, and my exceeding great Re-*

ward: But those glorious Advantages are lost, those ravishing Prospects withdrawn, and to my trembling Soul thou dost no more appear but as a consuming Fire, an inaccessible Majesty, my severe Judge, and my omnipotent Adversary; and who shall deliver me out of thy Hands? Where shall I find a Shelter from thy Wrath? What Shades can cover me from thy all-seeing Eye?

*One Glance from thee, one piercing Ray
Would kindle Darkneſs into Day:
The Veil of Night is no Diſguiſe,
No Screen from thy all-ſearching Eyes:
Thro' Midnight-Shades thou find'ſt thy Way,
As in the blazing Noon of Day.*

*But will the Lord caſt off for ever? Will he be favourable no more? Has God indeed forgotten to be gracious? Will he ſhut out my Prayer for ever, and muſt I never behold my Maker? Muſt I never meet thoſe Smiles that fill the heavenly Inhabitants with unutterable Joys? thoſe Smiles which enlighten the celeftial Region, and make everlaſting Day above? In vain then have theſe wretched Eyes beheld the Light, in vain am I endued with reaſon-
able*

XIII. *of the* H E A R T. 85

able Faculties and immortal Principles: Alas! what will they prove but everlasting Curses, if I must never see the Face of God?

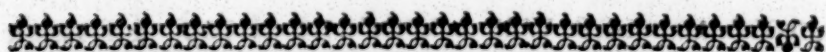
*Is it a Dream? or do I hear
The Voice that so delights my Ear?
Lo, he o'er Hills his Steps extends,
And bounding from the Cliffs descends:
Now like a Roe outstrips the Wind,
And leaves the panting Hart behind.*

I have waited for thee as they that wait for the Morning, and thy Returns are more welcome than the springing Day-light after the Horrors of a melancholy Night; more welcome than Ease to the Sick, than Water to the Thirsty, or Rest to the weary Traveller. How undone was I without thee? In vain, while thou wert absent, the World hath try'd to entertain me: All it could offer was like Jest to dying Men, or like Recreations to the Damn'd. On thy Favour alone my Tranquillity depends; depriv'd of that, I should sigh for Happiness in the midst of a Paradise: Thy Loving-kindness is better than Life, and if a Taste of thy Love be thus transporting, what Extasies shall I know when I drink my

86 *Devout* EXERCISES XIII.

Fill of the Streams of Bliss that flow from thy
Right-hand for ever? But when---

*When shall this happy Day of Vision be?
When I shall make a near Approach to
thee?* }
Be lost in Love and wrapt in Extasy?
*Oh! when shall I behold thee all serene,
Without this envious cloudy Veil between?*
'Tis true; the sacred Elements impart* }
Thy virtual Presence to my faithful Heart, }
But to my Sense still unreveal'd thou art. }
*This, tho' a great, is an imperfect Bliss,
To see a Shadow for the God I wish:
My Soul a more exalted Pitch would fly,
And view thee in the Heights of Majesty.*



XIV. *Banishment from God for ever.*

DEpart from me, ye Cursed: Oh! let me
never hear thy Voice pronounce those
dreadful Words. With what Terrors would
that Sentence pierce my Heart, while it thun-

* *At the Lord's-Supper.*

XIV. *of the* HEART. 87

ders in my Ears? Oh! rather speak me into my primitive Nothing, and with one potent Word finish my Existence. To be separated from thee, and curst with Immortality, who can sustain the intolerable Doom?

*O dreadful State of black Despair,
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful Station where
I must not taste his Love,*

nor view the Light of thy Countenance for ever. Unutterable Woe! there is no Hell beyond it. Separation from God is the Depth of Misery. Blackness of Darknes and eternal Night must necessarily involve a Soul excluded from thy Presence. What Life, what Joy, what Hope is to be found where thou art not? I want Words to paint my Thoughts of that dismal State. Oh! let me never be reserv'd for the dreadful Experience! rather let loose thy Wrath, and in a Moment reduce me into nothing.

Depart from thee! Oh! whither should I go from thee? Into utter Darknes? That makes no Addition at all to the Wretch's Misery that's banish'd from thy Face. After that fearful Doom, I should without Constraint

seek out Shades as dark as Hell, being most agreeable to my own Despair, and in the Horrors of eternal Night bewail the infinite Loss.

THE Remembrance of that lost Happiness would render celestial Day insufferable. The Light of Paradise could not cheer me without thy Favour: The Songs of Angels would but heighten my Anguish, and torment me with a Scene of Bliss which I must never taste. The Sight of thy Favourites, and the Glories of thy Court, would but excite my Envy, and fill me with Madness, while I consider'd myself the Object of thine eternal Indignation: Nor could all the Harmony of Heaven allay the Horror of that Reflection.

THE Groans of the Damn'd, and the Darkness of the infernal Caverns, would better suit my Grief. There to the Cries of tormented Ghosts, and to the Sound of eternal Tempests, I might join my wild Complaints, and lament the Loss of infinite Bliss, and curse my own Folly: But all the Plagues below, if I might speak my present Thoughts, should not extort a blasphemous Reflection on the divine Attributes; for I know I deserve eternal Misery, and even in Hell I think I should confess thy Justice. Thy long-experienced

XIV. *of the* H E A R T. 89

rienced Clemency, I am sure, ought to silence my Reproaches for ever, and to all Eternity leave thee unblemish'd with the Imputation of Cruelty.

B U T oh! what Agonies would the Remembrance of thy former Favour excite? What exquisite Remorse would it give me to recal those happy Moments when thou didst bless my retir'd Devotions with thy Presence? After I have relish'd those divine Entertainments, how bitter would the Dregs of thy Wrath be? Whither would thy Frowns sink me, after I have enjoy'd the Light of thy Countenance?

I F I must lose thy *Favour*, oh! let me forget what that Word imports, and blot for ever from my Remembrance the Joys that a Sense of thy Love has excited: Let no Traces of those sacred Transports be left on my Soul.

B U T must I depart from thee into everlasting Fire? Double and dreadful Curse! And yet unquenchable Flames, and infernal Chains (if I can judge in this Life of such awful Futurities) would be less terrible than the Sense of those lost Joys. That Loss would endure no Reflection; the Review would be for ever insufferable; the Ages of Eternity
could

could not diminish the exquisite Regret; still it would excite new and unutterable Anguish, and rack me with infinite Despair.

BLESSED God, pity the Soul whose extreme Horror is the Doom of an eternal Departure from thee. Draw my Spirit into the holiest and the nearest Union with thyself that is possible, while it dwells in this Flesh; and let me here commence that delightful Residence and Converse with God, which nor Death, nor Judgment shall ever destroy, nor shall a long Eternity ever put a Period to it.

*XV. The Glory of GOD in his Works
of Creation, Providence and Re-
demption.*

MY Being immediately flows from thee, and should I not praise my omnipotent Maker? I receiv'd the last Breath I drew from thee, thou dost sustain my Life this very Moment, and the next depends entirely on thy Pleasure. 'Tis the Dignity of my Nature to know, and my Happiness to praise and adore my great Original. But oh! thou Supreme of all Things, how art thou to be
extoll'd

XV. *of the* HEART. 91

extoll'd by mortal Man? *I say to Corruption,*
Thou art my Father, and to the Worms, Ye are
my Brethren; my Days are as a Hand's
Breadth, and my Life is nothing before thee;
but thou art the same, and thy Years never fail:
From everlasting to everlasting thou art God,
the incomprehensible, the immutable Divi-
nity. The Language of Paradise, and the
Strains of celestial Eloquence, fall short of thy
Perfections; the First-born Sons of Light
lose themselves in blissful Astonishment in
Search of thy Excellencies; even they with
filent Extasy adore thee, while thou art veil'd
with ineffable Splendor.

The bright, the blest'd Divinity is known
And comprehended by himself alone.

Who can conceive the Extent of that Power,
which out of Nothing brought Materials
for a rising World, and from a gloomy Chaos
bid the harmonious Universe appear?

Confusion heard the Voice, and wild Uproar
Stood rul'd; flood vast Infinity confin'd.

AT thy Word the Pillars of the Sky were
fram'd, and its beauteous Arches rais'd: Thy
Breath

Breath kindled the Stars, adorn'd the Moon with Silver Rays, and gave the Sun its flaming Splendor. Thou didst prepare for the Waters their capacious Bed, and by thy Power set Bounds to the raging Billows: By thee the Vallies were clothed in their flowry Pride, and the Mountains crown'd with Groves. In all the wonderful Effects of Nature, we adore and confess thy Power; thou utterest thy Voice in Thunder, and dost scatter thy Lightnings abroad; thou ridest on the Wings of the Wind, the Mountains smoke, and the Forests tremble at thy Approach; the Summer and Winter, the shady Night, and the bright Revolutions of the Day, are thine.

*These are thy glorious Works, Parent of Good,
Almighty; thine this universal Frame:*

Thus wondrous they; thyself how wondrous then?

BUT O! what must thy essential Majesty and Beauty be, if thou art thus illustrious in thy Works? if the Discoveries of thy Power and Wisdom are thus delightful, how transporting are the Manifestations of thy Goodness? From thee every thing that lives receives its Breath; and by thee are all upheld in Life. Thy Providence reaches the least Insect, for
thou

XV. *of the* HEART. 93

thou art good, and thy Care extends to all thy Works. Thou feedest the Ravens, and dost provide the young Lions their Prey: Thou scatterest thy Blessings with a liberal Hand on the whole Creation; Man, ungrateful Man, largely partakes thy Bounty. Thou causest thy Rain to descend, and makest thy Sun to shine on the Evil and Unthankful; *for thou art good, and thy Mercy endureth for ever.*

As the Creator and Preserver of Men, thou art gloriously manifest; but oh! how much more gloriously art thou reveal'd, as reconciling ungrateful Enemies to thyself by the Blood of thy eternal Son? Here thy Beneficence displays its brightest Splendor: Here thou dost fully discover thy most magnificent Titles, THE LORD, THE LORD GOD, MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, LONG-SUFFERING, AND ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS: *How unsearchable are thy Ways, and thy Paths past finding out?* Infinite Depths of Love, never to be express'd by human Language! and yet should Man be silent, the Stones themselves would speak, and the mute Creation find a Voice to upbraid his ungrateful Folly.

XVI. *Long-*

XVI. *Longing for the Coming of*
CHRIST.

COME, LORD JESUS, come quickly ;
Oh come, lest my Expectations faint,
lest I grow weary, and murmur at thy long
Delay. I am tired with these Vanities, and
the World grows every Day more un-enter-
taining and insipid ; it has now lost its Charms,
and finds my Heart insensible to all its Al-
lurements. With Coldness and Contempt I
view these transitory Glories, inspir'd with
nobler Prospects and vaster Expectation by
Faith. I see the promis'd Land, and every
Day brings me nearer the Possession of my
heavenly Inheritance. Then shall I see God
and live, and Face to Face behold my tri-
umphant Redeemer,

*And in his Favour find immortal Light.
Ye Hours and Days, cut short your tedious Flight;
Ye Months and Years (if such allotted be
In this detested barren World for me)
With hasty Revolution roll along,
I languish with Impatience to be gone.*

I HAVE

XVI. *of the* HEART. 95

I HAVE nothing here to linger for; my Hopes, my Rest, my Treasure, and my Joys are all above: My Soul faints for the Courts of the Lord in a dry and thirsty Land, where there is no Refreshment.

How long *shall I dwell in Mesheck, and sojourn in the Tents of Kedar?* When will the wearisom Journey of Life be finish'd? when shall I reach my everlasting Home, and arrive at my celestial Country? My Heart, my Wishes are already there: I have no Engagements to delay my Farewel, nothing to detain me here; but wander an unacquainted Pilgrim, a Stranger and Desolate, far from my native Regions.

MY Friends are gone before, and are now triumphing in the Skies, secure of the Conquest, possess'd of the Rewards of Victory. They survey the Field of Battle, and look back with Pleasure on the distant Danger: Death and Hell for ever vanquish'd, leave them in the Possession of endless Tranquillity and Joy; while I, beset with a thousand Snares, and tired with continual Toil, unsteadily maintain the Field, till active Faith steps in, assures me of the Conquest, and shews me the immortal Crown. 'Tis Faith tells me that *Light is sown for the Righteous,*
and

96 *Devout* EXERCISES XVII.

and Gladness for the Upright in Heart: It assures me that my Redeemer lives, and that he shall stand the last Day on the Earth; and tho' after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and not another; and these Eyes shall behold, tho' my Reins be consumed within me. Amen, even so come Lord Jesus. This must be the Language of my Soul till thou dost appear, and these my impatient Breathings after thee. Till I see thy Salvation, my Heart and my Flesh will pine for the living God.

Grant me, O LORD, to fulfil as a Hireling my Day; shorten the Space, and let it be full of Action. 'Tis of small Importance how few there are of these little Circles of Days and Hours, so they are but well fill'd up with Devotion, and with all proper Duty.



XVII. *Seeking after an absent* GOD.

OH! let not the Lord be angry, and I who am but Dust will speak: Why dost thou withdraw thyself, and suffer me to pursue thee in vain? If I am surrounded with
thy

XVII. *of the* HEART. 97

thy Immensity, why am I thus insensible of thee? Why do I not find thee if thou art every where present? I search thee in the Temple, where thou hast often met me; there I have seen the Traces of thy Majesty and Beauty; but those sacred Visions bless my Sight no more. I search thee in my secret Retirements, where I have called upon thy Name, and have often heard the Whispers of thy Voice; that celestial Conversation hath often reach'd and raptur'd my Soul, but I am solac'd no more with those divine Condescensions; I listen, but I hear those gentle Sounds no more; I pine and languish, but thou fleest me; still I wither in thy Absence, as a drooping Plant for the reviving Sun.

O WHEN wilt thou scatter this melancholly Darknes? when shall the Shadows flee before thee? when shall the chearful Glory of thy Grace dawn upon my Mind at thy Approach? I shall revive at thy Light; my vital Spirits will confess thy Presence; Grief and Anxiety will vanish before thee, and immortal Joys surround my Soul.

WHERE thou art present, Heaven and Happiness ensue; Hell and Damnation fills the Breast where thou art absent. While God

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withdraws I am encompass'd with Darkneſs and Deſpair ; the Sun and Stars ſhine with an uncomfortable Luſtre ; the Faces of my Friends grow tireſome ; the Smiles of Angels would fail to chear my languiſhing Spirit. I grow unacquainted with Tranquility ; Peace and Joy are empty Sounds to me, and Words without a Meaning.

T E L L me not of Glory and Pleaſure, there are no ſuch things without my God ; while he withdraws, what Delight can theſe Trifles afford ? All that amuſes Mankind, are but Dreams of Happineſs, Shades and fantaſtick Appearances : what Compensation can they make for an infinite Good departed ? all Nature cannot repair my Loſs : Heaven and Earth would offer their Treasures in vain ; not all the Kingdoms of this World, nor the Thrones of Archangels, could give me a Re-compenſe for an abſent God.

O W H E R E can my Grief find Redreſs ? whence can I draw Satisfaction when the Fountain of Joy ſeals up its Streams ? My Sorrows are hopeleſs till he return ; without him my Night will never ſee a Dawn, but extend to everlaſting Darkneſs : Content and Joy will be eternal Strangers to my Breſt. Had I all things within the Compaſs of Creation

XVII. *of the* HEART. 99

tion to delight me, his Frowns would blast the whole Enjoyment : Unreconcil'd to God, my Soul would be for ever at variance with itself.

EVEN now, while I believe thy Glory hid from me but with a transient Eclipse, while I wait for thy Return as for the dawning Day, my Soul suffers inexpressible Agonies at the Delay ; the Minutes seem to linger, and Days are lengthen'd into Ages : But, Lord, what keener Anguish should I feel, did I think thy Presence had totally forsaken me, did I imagine thy Glory should no more arise on my Soul ? My Spirits fail at the Supposition ; I cannot face the dreadful Apprehensions of my God for ever gone. Is it not Hell in its most horrid Prospect ? Eternal Darkneſs, and the undying Worm, infinite Ruin and irreparable Damage ? Compar'd to this, what were all the Plagues that Earth could threaten, or Hell invent ? what's Disgrace, and Poverty, and Pain ? what's all that Mortals fear, real or imaginary Evils ? they are nothing compar'd to the Terrors which the Thought of losing my God excites.

O THOU, who art my boundless Treasure, my infinite Delight, my All, my ineffable Portion, can I part with thee ? I may see without

Light, and breathe without Air, sooner than be bless'd without my God. Happiness separate from thee were a Contradiction, an Impossibility (if I dare speak it) to Omnipotence itself. I feel a Flame which the most glorious Creation could not satisfy; an Emptiness which nothing but infinite Love could fill. I must find thee, or weary myself in an eternal Pursuit. Nothing shall divert me in the endless Search, no Obstacle shall fright me back, no Allurement withhold me, nothing shall flatter or relieve my Impatience; my Bliss, my Heaven, my All depends on the Success. Shew me where thou art, O my God, conduct me into thy Presence, and let thy Love confine me there for ever.



XVIII. *Appeals to GOD concerning
the Supremacy of Love to him.*

O GOD, when I cease to love and praise thee, let me cease to breathe and live; when I forget thee, let me forget the Name of Happiness, and let every pleasing Idea be raz'd from my Memory. When thou art not
my

XVIII. *of the* HEART. 101

my supreme Delight, let all things else deceive me; let me grow unacquainted with Peace, and seek Repose in vain: let Delusions mock my gayest Hopes, let my Desires find no Satisfaction, till they are terminated all in thee. When I forget the Satisfaction of thy Love, O my God, let Pleasure be a Stranger to my Soul; when I prefer not that to my chiefest Joy, let me be insensible of all Delight; when thy Benignity is not dearer to me than Life, let that Life become my Burden and my Pain.

SEARCH the inmost Recesses of my Heart, and if thou findest any Competitor there, remove the darling Vanity, and blot every Name but thine from my Breast. Let me find nothing but Emptiness in the Creature, when I forsake the All-sufficient Creator: Let the Streams be cut off when I wander away and abandon the Fountain. Let me be destitute of Assistance when I cease to rely on thee; let my Lips be for ever silent when they refuse to acknowledge thy Benefits, and make not thee the Subject of their highest Praise. Let no joyful Strain enter at my Ears, when thy Name is not the most delightful Sound they can convey to my Heart.

I HAVE been pronouncing heavy Curses
F 3 on

on myself, if thy Love be not my chief Blessing ; yet, O my dearest Good, my Portion, and my only Felicity, might I not go on farther still, and even venture immortal Joys on the Sincerity of my Love to thee ? Blessed Lord, forgive these dangerous Efforts of a mortal Tongue, which are the mere Out-breakings of a fervent Affection, I could even dare to pledge all my Hopes and my Pretensions to future Happiness, (and O let not my Heart deceive me) I think I could risque them all, if thou thyself art not the Object of my brightest Hopes, and the Light of thy Countenance the Height of that expected Happiness.

If I desire any thing in Heaven or on Earth in comparison of thee, I am almost ready to say, Banish me as an eternal Exile from the Light of Paradise : Even that Paradise would be melancholy Darkness without thee, and the obscurest Corner of the Creation, bless'd with thy Presence, would be more agreeable. Oh ! where could I be happy remote from thee ? what imaginable Good could supply thy Absence ? Say, O my God, do I not love thee ?

SHALL I call the Holy Angels to witness ? shall I call Heaven and Earth to witness ? Will not the most high God himself, the Professor
of

XIX. *of the* H E A R T. 103

of Heaven and Earth condescend to witness the Ardour and Sincerity of my Love?

WITH what Pleasure do I reflect on the Obligations by which I have devoted myself to thee? My Soul collects itself, and with an intire Assent gives up all its Powers to thee: I would bind myself to thee beyond all the Ties that Mortals know. You Ministers of Light, give me your Flames, and teach me your celestial Forms; let all be noble and pathetick, and solemn as your own immortal Vows, and I will joyfully go through them all to bind myself to my God for ever. Say, now, ye Heavens and Earth, say, ye holy Angels, and O thou all-knowing God, say, do I not love thee?



XIX. *A devout Rapture, or Love to God inexpressible.*

THOU radiant Sun, thou Moon, and all ye sparkling Stars, how gladly would I leave your pleasant Light to see the Face of God? Ye Crystal Streams, ye Groves and flowry Lawns, my innocent Delights, how joyfully could I leave you to meet that blis-

ful Prospect? and you delightful Faces of my Friends, I would this Moment quit you all to see him whom my Soul loves; so loves, that I can find no Words to express the unutterable Ardour: Not as the Miser loves his Wealth, nor the Ambitious his Grandeur; not as the Libertine loves his Pleasures, or the generous Man his Friend: these are flat Similitudes to describe such an intense Passion as mine. Not as a Man scorch'd in a Fever, longs for a cooling Draught; not as a weary Traveller wishes for soft Repose; my restless Desires admit of no equal Comparison from these.

I LOVE my Friend; my vital Breath and the Light of Heaven are dear to me: But should I say, I love my God as I love these, I should belie the sacred Flame which aspires to Infinity. 'Tis thee, abstractly thee, O uncreated Beauty, that I love; in thee, my Wishes are all terminated; in thee as in their blissful Centre, all my Desires meet, and there they must be eternally fixed: 'Tis thou alone that must constitute my everlasting Happiness. Were the Harps of Angels silent, there would be Harmony for me in the Whispers of thy Love: Were the Fields of Light darken'd, thy Smiles would bless me with everlasting Day: the Vision of thy Face
will

XIX. *of the* HEART. 105

will attract my Eyes, nor give me leisure to waste a Look on other Objects to all Eternity any farther than God is to be seen in his Creatures. All their Beams of Grace, and Joy, and Glory, are deriv'd from thee the eternal Sun, and will merit my Attention no farther than they reflect thy Image, or discover thy Excellencies.

EVEN at this Distance, encompass'd with the Shades of Death, and the Mists of Darkness, in these cold melancholy Regions when a Ray of thy Love breaks in on my Soul, when thro' the Clouds I can trace but one feeble Beam, even that obscures all human Glory, and gives me a Contempt for whatever Mortality can boast. What Wonders then will the open Vision of thy Face effect, when I shall enjoy it in so sublime a Degree, that the Magnificence of the Skies will not draw my Regard, nor the Converse of Angels divert my Thoughts from thee? Thou wilt engross my everlasting Attention, and I should abound in Felicity if I had nothing to entertain me but immediate Communion with the infinite Divinity.

MEND thy Pace, old lazy Time, and shake thy heavy Sands; make shorter Circles, ye rolling Planets; when will your destin'd Courses

Courses be fulfilled? Thou restless Sun, how long wilt thou travel the celestial road? when will thy starry walk be finished? when will the commissioned angel arrest thee in thy progress, and lifting up his Hand, swear by the unnutterable Name, *that Time shall be no more.* O happy Period! my impatient Soul springs forward to salute thee, and leaves the lagging Days, and Months, and Years far behind. *Make haste, my Beloved, and be like a Roe, or a young Hart on the spicy Mountains.*

I PINE, I die for a Sight of thy Countenance; oh! turn the Veil aside, blow away the separating Cloud; pull out the Pins of this Tabernacle, break the Cords, and let fall the Curtain of Mortality. Oh! let it interpose no longer between me and my perfect Bliss. I feel those Flames of divine Love, which are unextinguishable as the Lights of Heaven, not Death itself shall quench the sacred ardour.

YE Ministers of Light, ye Guardians of the Just, stand and witness to my Vows; and in a humble Dependance on thy Grace, O *Jesus*, may I not venture to bid these thy flaming Ministers protest against me when I change my Love, and stand my Accusers at the last Judgment? When I prove false to thee,
may

XIX. *of the* HEART. 107

may I not venture to say to them all, Bring in your awful Evidence, and proclaim my Perjury.

*For you have listen'd, while the sacred Name
That kindles in each heavenly Breast a Flame,
You listen'd while it melted on my Tongue,
Flow'd from my Lips, and grac'd the Midnight
Song.*

*Bless'd was the Time, and swiftly fled the Hours
While holy Love employ'd my noblest Powers:
The Heavens appear'd, and the propitious Skies
Unveil'd their inmost Glories to my Eyes.*

*Oh! stay, I cry'd, ye happy Moments stay,
Nor in your Flight snatch these Delights
away:*

*I ask no more the rising Sun to view,
To Mortals and their Hopes I bid adieu.*

THESE Heavens and this Earth have been Witnesses to my Vows: The holy Angels have been witnesses, and all will join together to condemn me when I violate my Faith. Strengthen and confirm it, O my Saviour, and make the Bonds of it immortal.

IF I were only to reason upon this Subject, I might say, what Motive could Earth,
what

what could Hell, what could Heaven itself propose to tempt my Soul to change its Love? what could they lay in the Balance against an infinite Good? what could be thrown in as a Stake against the Favour of God? Ask the happy Souls who know what the Light of his Countenance imports, who drink in Joy and Immortality from his Smiles, ask them what Value they set on their Enjoyments; ask them what in Heaven or Earth should purchase one Moment's Interval of their Bliss; ask some radiant Seraph, amidst the Fervency of his Raptures, at what Price he values his Happiness: and when these have named the Purchase, Earth and Hell may try to balance mine. Let them spread the Baits that tempt deluded Men to Ruin; let Riches, Honour, Beauty, and bewitching Pleasure appear in all their Charms, the Sensuality of the present and past Ages, the *Persian* Delicacy, and the *Roman* Pride; let them uncover the golden Mines, and disclose the Ruby sparkling in its Bed; let them open the Veins of Sapphire, and shew the Diamond glittering on its Rock; let them all be thrown into the Balance; alas! their Weight is too little and too light.----Let the Pageantries of State be added, imperial Titles, and the En-
signs

signs of Majesty ; put in all that boundless Vanity imagines, or wild Ambition craves, Crowns and Sceptres, regal Vestments and golden Thrones----the Scale still mounts.---- Throw in the World intire----'tis unsubstantial, and light as airy Vanity.

ARE these thy highest Boasts, O deluding World?---- Ye Ministers of Darknes, have you nothing else to offer? are these your utmost Proposals? are these a Compensation for the FAVOUR OF GOD? Alas! that boundless Word has a Meaning which out-weighs them all: Infinite Delight, unconceivable Joy are express'd in it ; the Light of his Countenance signifies more than Angels can describe, or Mortality imagine: And shall I quit all that an everlasting Heaven means, for empty Shadows?

Go, ye baffled Tempters, go offer your Toys to Madmen and Fools; they all vanish under my Scorn, and cannot yield so much as an Amusement to my aspiring Thoughts. The Sun in all his spacious Circuit, beholds nothing to tempt my Wishes. These winding Skies in all their ample Round contain nothing equal to my Desires ; my Ambition has far different Ends, and other Prospects

110 *Devout* EXERCISES XIX.

Prospects in view ; nothing below the Joys of Angels can satisfy me.

LET me explore the Worlds of Life and Beauty, and find a Path to the dazzling Recesses of the Most High : Let me drink at the Fountain-head of Pleasure, and derive all that I want from original and uncreated Fullness and Felicity.

OH divine Love ! let me launch out into thy pleasurable Depths, and be swallowed up of thee : Let me plunge at once in immortal Joy, and lose myself in the infinite Ocean of Happiness.

TILL then I pine for my celestial country ; till then I murmur to the Winds and Streams, and tell the solitary shades my Grief. The Groves are conscious to my Complaints, and the Moon and Stars listen to my Sighs ; by their silent Lights I talk over my heavenly Concerns, and give a Vent to my divine Affections in mortal Language ; then looking upward, I grow impatient to reach the milky Way, the Seats of Joy and Immortality.

*Come Love, come Life, and that blest'd Day
For which I languish, come away ;
When this dry Soul, these Eyes shall see,
And drink the unseal'd Source of thee.*

OH

XIX. *of the* HEART. III

OH come, I cry, thou whom my Soul loveth : I would go on, but want Expresssion, and vainly struggle with the unutterable Thought.

TELL me, you Sons of Light, who feel the Force of these celestial Fires, in what Language you paint their sacred Violence ? or do the Tongues of Seraphs falter ? does the Language of Paradise want Emphasis here, and immortal Eloquence fail ? Surely your Happiness is more perfect than all your Descriptions of it : Heaven ecchoes to your charming Notes as far as they reach, while divine Love, which is all your Song, is infinite, and knows no Limits of Degree or Duration.

YET I would say, some gentle Spirit, come and instruct me in your Art ; lend me a golden Harp, and guide the sacred Flight ; let me imitate your devout Strains, let me copy out your Harmony, and then,

*Some of the fairest Quire above
Shall flock around my Song,
With Joy to bear the Name they love
Sound from a mortal Tongue.*

BLESSED and immortal Creatures, I long to join with you in your celestial Style of
Ado-

Adoration and Love, I long to learn your Extasies of Worship and Joy in a Language which Mortals cannot pronounce, and to speak the divine Passion of my Soul in Words which are now unspeakable.



XX. *Self-reproof for Inactivity.*

IS it possible that I should one Day be rapt almost into the third Heavens, and e're a few Weeks have passed over me, I should find myself creeping among the Insects of the Earth, and almost as meanly busied as they? Can divine Love, which exalted me lately into flaming Transports, so far subside and grow cool within me? can it leave me so unactive as I now feel myself? What shall I do to shame my Conscience with Reproaches, and renew the Flame of religious Zeal and Vigour.

ALAS! how does the Activity of Men about the little Affairs of human Life condemn my Negligence in Matters of everlasting Consequence? Does the fond Lover with such Anxiety and Impatience pursue the Object of his Wishes, and shall not divine

Beauty and infinite Loveliness enflame my Desires to a nobler Height, and excite my languishing Devotion?

ARE the Ambitious so restless and sollicitous to make themselves great, and to purchase the Veneration of Fools? Do they lay such mighty Projects, and compass their Designs with such Pains and Difficulty, for mere Pageantry and gaudy Trifles; and shall I, who am a Candidate for Heaven, a Probationer for celestial Dignity, lose my Title for want of Diligence? Shall I faint in the noble Strife, when God and Angels are ready to assist me, and every Moment's Toil will be recompenc'd with eternal Ages of Rest and Triumph?

SEE, see, the Moments fly, the Labour shortens, and the immense Reward draws near; the Palm of Victory, the starry Crown are in View; the happy Realms and Fields of Light entertain me with their glorious Prospect. Rouze thee, my Soul, to the most active Pursuit of these Felicities: Waken all thy sprightly Powers, and let it never, never be thy Reproach, that the Vigour and Intenseness of thy Labours fall short of the Pretensions of thy Desire; or that thy holy Industry should sink so far below the Fervour

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of

of those Affections, which in a devout Hour thou hast pronounced *inexpressible*.

O LORD, what a mutable thing is Man? what Frailty works in this Flesh and Blood, and hangs heavy upon our better Powers? 'Tis Grace, divine Grace alone, can keep alive that immortal Spark within us, which came first from Heaven, and first taught our Hearts to arise and spring upward. Preserve and complete thy own Work, Almighty Grace.



XXI. *A joyful View of approaching Death.*

O Death, where is thy Sting? where is thy boasted Victory? The Conquest is mine; I shall pass in Triumph thro' thy dark Dominions, and thro' the Grace of the Son of God, my divine Leader, I shall appear there not a Captive but a Conqueror.

O KING of Terrors, where are thy formidable Looks? I can see nothing dreadful in thy Aspect? Thou appearest with no Tokens of Defiance, nor dost thou come with Summons from a severe Judge; but gentle
Invi-

XVII. *of the* HEART. 115

Invitations from my blessed Redeemer, who has past gloriously thro' thy Territories, in his Way to his Throne.

THRICE welcome, thou kind Messenger of my Liberty and Happiness! a thousand times more welcome than Jubilee to the wretched Slave, than Pardon to a condemn'd Malefactor: I am going from Darknes and Confinement to immense Light and perfect Liberty; from these tempestuous Regions to the soft and peaceful Climes above; from Pain and Grief to everlasting Ease and Tranquillity. For the Toils of Virtue, I shall immediately receive its vast Rewards; for the Reproach of Fools, the Honour and Applause of Angels. In a few Minutes I shall be higher than yonder Stars, and brighter far than they. I shall range the boundless Ether, and breathe the balmy Airs of Paradise. I shall presently behold my glorious Maker, and sing Hallelujahs to my exalted Saviour.

AND now come, ye bright Guardians of the Just, conduct me through the unknown and trackless Ether, for you pass and repass this celestial Road continually; you have Commission not to leave me till I arrive at *Mount Sion*, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, the City of the living God; till I come to the in-

numerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

HOLD out, Faith and Patience ; 'tis but a little while and your Work will be at an End ; but a few Moments and these Sighs and Groans shall be converted into everlasting Hallelujahs ; but a few weary Steps and the Journey of Life will be finish'd. One Effort more, and I shall have gain'd the Top of the everlasting Hills, and from yonder bright Summit shall presently look back on the Dangers I have escaped in my Travels through the Wilderness.

ROLL faster on, ye lingering Minutes ; the nearer my Joys, the more impatient I am to seize them : After these painful Agonies how greedily shall I drink in immortal Ease and Pleasure ? Break away, ye thick Clouds, be gone, ye envious Shades, and let me behold the Glories ye conceal : Let me see the promis'd Land, and survey the happy Regions I am immediately to possess. How long will you interpose between me and my bright Sun ? between me and the unclouded Face of God ? Look up, my Soul, see how sweetly those reviving Beams break forth ! how they dispel the Gloom, and gild the Shades of Death !

O BLEST

XXI. *of the* H E A R T. 117

O BLEST Eternity, with what a chearful Splendour dost thou dawn on my Soul? with thee comes Liberty, and Peace, and Love, and endless Felicity; but Pain, and Sorrow, and Tumult, and Death, and Darkness vanish before thee for ever. I am just upon the Shores of those happy Realms where uninterrupted Day and eternal Spring reside: Yonder are the delectable Hills and harmonious Vales which continually eccho to the Songs of Angels. There the blisful Fields extend their Verdure, and there the immortal Groves ascend; but how dazling is thy Prospect, O City of God, of whom such glorious things are spoken? In thee *there shall be no more Night, nor need of the Sun or Moon*; for the Throne of God, and of the Lamb is in the Midst of thee, *and the Nations that are saved shall walk in thy Light, and the Kings of the Earth shall bring their Glory and Honour into thee, and there the glorious Lord shall be to us a Place of Defence, a Place of Streams and broad Rivers*, and the Voice of Joy, and the Shout of Triumph shall be heard in thee for ever.

There holy Souls perpetual Sabbaths keep

And never are concern'd for Food or Sleep:

*There new-come Saints with Wreaths of Light
are crown'd,*

*While ivory Harps and silver Trumpets sound:
There flaming Seraphs sacred Hymns begin,
And raptur'd Cherubs loud Responses sing.*

*My Eyes shall there behold the King in his
Beauty, and oh! how ravishing will the As-
pects of his Love be? What unutterable Ex-
tacies shall I feel, when I meet those Smiles
which enlighten Heaven, and exhilarate all
the celestial Regions? when I shall view the
beatifick Glory without one interposing Cloud
to Eternity? when I shall drink my Fill at
the Fountains of Joy, and in those Rivers of
Pleasure that flow from his Right-hand for
ever.*

XXII. *A devout Resignation of Self
to the divine Power and Goodness.*

MY all-sufficient Friend, *my Shield, and
my exceeding great Reward!* I have
enough: Unbounded Avarice can covet no-
thing beyond Thee; the Soul whom thou dost
not

XXII. *of the* HEART. 119

not suffice, deserves to be eternally poor. Thou art my supreme Happiness, my voluntary Choice: I took thy Love alone for my Treasure in that blest Day when I enter'd into Covenant with thee, and became thine: I made no Articles with thee for the Friendships, the Honours and Pleasures of the World; but solemnly renounced them all, and chose thy Favour for my single Inheritance, leaving the Conduct of my Life entirely to thee.

THESE were my Vows, and these I have often renew'd; and shall I now retract such sacred Obligations, and alter a Choice so just and reasonable? Forbid it, gracious God! let me never be guilty of such Madness: The World has often disappointed my most confident Expectations, but thou hast never deceiv'd me. In all my Distress I have found thee a certain Refuge, my *Shield, my Fortress, my high Tower, my Deliverer, my Rock, and he in whom I trust.* When there was none to save me, thy powerful Hand has set me free; thou hast redress'd my Grievances, and dissipated my Fears; thou has brought me Light out of Obscurity, and turn'd my Darkness into Day.

WHEN the World could afford me nothing but Tempest and Disorder, with thee I have

found Repose and undisturb'd Tranquillity. Thou hast been my long-experienc'd Refuge, my unfailing Confidence, and I stedfastly depend on thee for my future Conduct. I cannot err when guided by infinite Wisdom; I must be safe in the Arms of eternal Love, to which I humbly resign myself. Let me have Riches or Poverty, Honour or Contempt; whatever comes from thy Hands shall be thankfully receiv'd. I would hear no Voice but thine, nor make a Step but where I am following thee.

IF thou wouldst leave me to chuse for myself, I would resign the Choice again to thee, I dread nothing more than the Guidance of my own blind Desires; I tremble at the Thoughts of such a fatal Liberty: Avert, gracious God, that miserable Freedom. Thou foreseest all Events, and at one single View dost look thro' eternal Consequences; therefore do thou determine my Circumstances, not to gratify my own wild Desires, but to advance thy Glory.

THOU hast an unquestion'd Right to dispose of me; I am thine by necessary Ties and voluntary Engagements, which I thankfully acknowledge and solemnly renew: Deliberately and entirely I put myself into thy
Hands,

XXII. *of the* HEART. 121

Hands. Whatever Interest I have in this World I sacrifice to thee, and leave my dearest Enjoyments to thy Disposal, acknowledging it my greatest Happiness to be guided by thee.

Lord, what is Man, that thou art mindful of him? that thou who art supremely blest'd, and independently happy, shouldst concern thyself with human Affairs, and condescend to make our Wants as much thy Care as if mortal Miseries could reach thee, and interrupt immortal Blessedness. Thou wouldst make us sensible of thine Indulgence by the most tender Similitudes: A Father's gentle Care but faintly shadows thine, and all we can conceive of human Pity falls short of thy Compassion. Thou dost seem to share in our Calamities, and sympathize in all our Grief. No Friend flies to our Assistance with half the Speed that Love brings thee, nor canst thou ever want Methods to relieve those that confide in thee.

THY Providence finds or makes its Way thro' all Oppositions: The Streams shall roll back to their Fountains, the Sun shall stand still, and the Course of Nature be revers'd, rather than thou want Means to bring thy Purposes to pass. No Obstacle puts a Stand
to

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to thy Designs, nor obstruct thy Methods : 'Tis thy Will that makes Nature and Necessity : Who can stay thy Hand, or say unto thee, *What dost thou ?* Thy Counsel shall stand, and thou wilt do all thy Pleasure. Nothing is impossible for thee to accomplish : Wherever I cast my Eyes, I see Instances of thy Power : The extended Firmament, the Sun and Stars, tell me what thou art able to perform ; they attest thy Omnipotence, and rebuke my Unbelief. The whole Creation pleads for thee, and condemns my Infidelity.

ALMIGHTY God, forgive my Diffidence, while I confess 'tis most inexcusable. Thy Hand is not shorten'd, nor are the Springs of thy Bounty seal'd ; thy antient Miracles have not exhausted thy Strength, nor hath perpetual Beneficence impoverish'd thee ; thy Power remains undiminish'd, and thy Mercy endureth for ever. That dazzling Attribute surrounds me with transporting Glories : Which Way soever I turn, I meet the bright Conviction : I cannot recal a Day of my past Life on which some Signature of thy Goodness is not stamp'd.

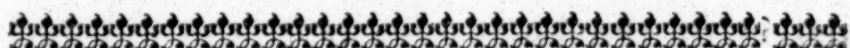
*Oh ! who hath tasted of thy Clemency
In greater measure or more oft than I ?*

Which

XXIII. *of the* HEART. 123

*Which Way so'er I turn my Face or Feet,
I see thy Mercy and thy Glory meet.*

IN whatever thou hast granted, or whatever thou hast deny'd me, thy Beneficence has been mingled with every Dispensation; thou hast not taken the Advantage of my Follies, nor been severe to my Sins; but hast remember'd my Frame, and treated me with the utmost Indulgence. Glory be to thy Name for ever.



XXIII. *Redeeming Love.*

ALmighty Love, the Theme of every heavenly Song! Infinite Grace, the Wonder of Angels! forgive a mortal Tongue that attempts thy Praise; and yet should Man be silent, the mute Creation would find a Voice to upbraid him.

BUT oh! in what Language shall I speak? with what Circumstance shall I begin? shall I roll back the Volumes of Eternity, and begin with the glorious Design that determin'd Man's Redemption before the Birth of Time, before the Confines of Creation were fix'd,

Infinite

*Infinite Years before the Day,
Or Heavens began to roll.*

SHALL I speak in general of all the Nations of the Redeemed? or, to excite my own Gratitude, shall I consider myself, my worthless self, included by an eternal Decree among the Number of those who should hear of a Redeemer's Name, and be mark'd out a Partaker of that immense Privilege? Before the Foundation of the Hills were laid, the gracious Design was form'd, and the blessed Plan of it schemed out before the Curtains of the Sky were spread.

LORD! what is Man? what am I? what is all the human Race, to be thus regarded? O narrow Thoughts, and narrower Words! here confess your Defects; these are Heights not to be reach'd by you. Adorable Measures of infinite Clemency! unsearchable Riches of Grace! with what Astonishment do I survey you! I am swallowed and lost in the glorious Immensity. All hail, ye divine Mysteries, ye glorious Paths of the unsearchable Deity! let me adore tho' I can never express you.

YET should I be silent, Heaven and Earth, nay, Hell itself would reproach me: The
Damn'd

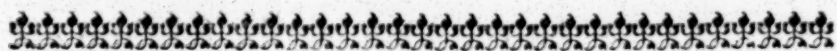
XXIII. *of the* HEART. 125

Damn'd themselves would call me ungrateful, should I fail to celebrate that Grace whose Loss they are for ever lamenting; a Loss that leaves them for ever desperate and undone. 'Tis this Grace which tunes the Harps of Heaven, and yields them an immortal Subject of Harmony and Praise. The Spirits of just Men made perfect fix their Contemplations here; they adore the glorious Mystery, and while they sing the Wonders of redeeming Love, they ascribe sublime and living Honours to him that sits on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever. And infinitely worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the grateful Homage: Who shall not praise and magnify thy Name? Who shall deny the Tribute of thy Glory?

BUT, alas! what can mortal Man add to thee? what can Nothingness and Vanity give? We murmur from the Dust, and attempt thy Praise from the Depths of Misery; yet thou dost condescend to hear and listen to our broken Accents; amidst the *Hallelujahs* of Angels our Groans ascend to thee, our Complaints reach thee: From the Height of thy Happiness, and from the Exaltations of eternal Glory, thou hast a Regard to Man, poor, wretched Man! thou receivest his
Homage

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Homage with Delight; his Praises mingle with the Harmony of Angels, nor interrupt the sacred Concord. Those Natives of Heaven, those Morning-stars sing together in their heavenly Beatitudes, nor disdain to let the Sons of Earth and Mortality join with them in celebrating the Honours of Jesus, their Lord and ours: To him be every Tongue devoted, and let every Creature for ever praise him. *Amen.*



XXIV. *Pleading for Pardon and Holiness.*

IMmortal Spring of Life, the Fountain of all Existence, the First and Last, *without beginning of Days, or end of Years*; before the Heavens were created thou wast, and shalt remain unchang'd while they wax old and decay. Thou art infinitely blest'd in thy self, thy Glory admits of no Addition; the Praises of Angels cannot heighten thy Happiness, nor the Blasphemies of Hell diminish it. Thou can'st do every thing, and thy Power finds no Obstacle. *Thou madest Heaven and Earth, the Sea and the Fountains of Water; thou dost according to thy Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth;*
thou

XXIV. *of the* HEART. 127

thou holdest the Waters in the Hollow of thy Hand, and measurest out the Heavens with a Span : Thou comprehendest the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weighest the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance : Thou coverst thyself with Light, as with a Garment, and art surrounded with inaccessible Splendour : Thou art glorious in Holiness, fearful in Praises ; the Heavens are not clean in thy Sight, but thou chargest thine Angels with Folly : What then is Man, that drinks in Iniquity like Water ? What is Man, that thou art mindful of him ; or the Son of Man, that thou dost thus visit him ? 'Tis because thou art good, and thy Mercy endureth for ever ; Mercy is thy prevailing Attribute. Thou art compassionate, and infinitely gracious, and hast fully manifested thy Love and Beneficence to the Race of Man in the glorious Methods of our Redemption from everlasting Bondage and Death by thy Son Jesus.

THEREFORE with the lowest Reverence, and most humble Gratitude, I desire to prostrate myself before thee, acknowledging it my greatest Honour, and undeserv'd Privilege, to approach the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ; I that am unworthy to utter thy tremendous Name, or once to lift up my
Eyes

Eyes to Heaven. To my own Confusion, I here confess I have abus'd the Mercy which I now implore, and injured that Goodness and Forbearance by my Sins which I am now addressing myself to. I have forfeited the very Benefits I ask, and despis'd those sacred Privileges which I am forc'd to plead: I can use scarce any Motive but what would carry in it my own Condemnation. Shall I implore thy Mercy by the gracious Terms of the New Covenant, seal'd by the Blood of thy eternal Son? alas! that gracious Covenant I have violated, and profan'd its sacred Seals: I have sinn'd against the clearest Light, and the tenderest Instances of Love: I have not only broken my Obligations to thee as my Creator; but the stronger Engagements of thy Adoption, even the glorious Privilege of being admitted into thy Family, and number'd among the Children of God.

BUT still those very Circumstances that aggravate my Guilt, exalt thy Mercy; here the Freeness and Magnificence of thy Grace will display itself; here thou wilt answer the indulgent Title of a Father in its tenderest Extent; I have no Sins too great for infinite Clemency to pardon. Thou art God, and not Man; and as the Heavens are high above
 I the

XXIV. *of the* HEART. 129

the Earth, so high are thy Ways of Compassion above all human Methods.

I DARE not set Bounds to thy Goodness, nor affirm that *thus far, and no farther*, divine Patience extends. Thou hast pardoned and restored me to thy Favour too often for me now to despair: My penitent Sighs were never rejected, nor my humble Request unanswered: I have always found the Heavens open, and the Throne of GOD accessible, thro' the Blood of a Redeemer. By his Agony and bloody Sweat, by his Cross and Passion, by his painful Death and glorious Resurrection, I implore thy Pardon: He has made a full Atonement, and divine Justice will demand no farther Satisfaction. *To him give all the Prophets Witness, that thro' his Name, whosoever believes in his Name shall receive Remission of Sins.*

O BLESSED *Jesus!* the Hope of the *Gentiles*, the Salvation of the Ends of the Earth; the great *Messiah*, the promis'd Saviour, who dost answer those glorious Titles in their utmost Signification; to thee, my certain, my experienced Refuge, I fly: O Son of God, hear me; O Lamb of God, who takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy on me.

O ETERNAL Spirit, the promis'd Comforter, come with all thy sacred Consolations: Come, and be as Dew to the drooping Flowers, as Rain to the parched Ground; oh! come with thy reviving Light, and dispel the Darkneſs that beclouds my Soul: Break in like the Sun after a melancholy Night; one Beam of thine would melt this frozen, this obdurate Heart, and kindle in my Soul the Spark of holy Love: Breathe upon my cold Affections, and raiſe them to a ſacred Flame.

SEARCHER of Hearts, from whom nothing is conceal'd, whoſe penetrating Eyes find out Hypocriſy in its darkeſt Diſguiſe; thou knoweſt the Deſires of my Soul, and art my impartial Witneſs that I kneel not here for the Riches and Honours of the World; that I am not proſtrate before thee for Length of Days or Pleaſure; but that 'tis the Kingdom of God, and the Righteouſneſs thereof, that I ſeek. Give me not my Portion with the Rich and Great, but let me have my humble Lot with thy Children; let me bear Contempt and Deriſion, and ſuffer Reproach with the People of God, rather than enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin, which are but for a Seaſon.

THY

XXIV. *of the* HEART. 131

THY Favour is the End of all my Wishes, the constant Subject of my Prayer. Oh! thou whose Ears are open to the Wants of all thy Creatures, who hearest the young Ravens when they cry from their Nests to thee, who givest the Men of the World the transitory Things they chuse, wilt thou deny the Desires which thou thyself dost inspire and approve? O let me be fill'd with that Righteousness which I hunger and thirst after, and be satisfied with thy Likeness. Thou can'st not be diminish'd, whatever Perfection thou dost communicate to the Creature; endless Liberality could not make thee poor.

I ASK not Privileges above the Capacity of my Nature, nor aspire to the Perfections of Angels: I only beg that I may reach those Heights of Holiness and divine Love, which Souls invested with a mortal Body like mine, and encumber'd with the same human Passions, have attained. But in vain I strive to imitate those bright Examples thou hast set before me; without thy Assistance, all my Endeavours will prove successless. Thou knowest the Frailty of my Nature, and the mighty Difficulties I have to encounter: I have not only the Allurements of the World, but all the Stratagems of Hell to engage with,

and a treacherous Heart within, ready on all Occasions to betray me into Sin and endless Perdition: O let my Impotence and Danger awaken thy Compassion.

REMEMBER thy former Benignity, O Lord, and let that engage thee to grant me new Supplies of that Grace by which alone I shall prove victorious. Thy Bounty to any of the Works of thy Hands must always flow from the Goodness of thy own Nature; for what Creature can pretend to merit any thing from thee? I would urge nothing but thy own infinite Mercy, when I entreat thee not to let me perish after the wonderful Things thou hast done for my Soul; after all the Pledges thou hast given me of thy Love, let not my Follies provoke thee to forsake me; but remember thy Covenant, and its gracious Articles, and act according to thy own ineffable Benignity, which has been the glorious Motive of every Favour I have received from thee.

XXV. *A Transport of Gratitude for
saving Mercy.*

I Bleſs a thouſand times the happy Day
when firſt a Beam of heavenly Light
broke in on my Soul; when the Day-ſtar
from on High viſited me, and the celeftial
Light began to dawn. I welcom'd its chear-
ful Luſtre, and felt the ſacred Influence;
the Flames of holy Love awoke, and holy
Joys were kindled.

THE Earth and all its Pageantry diſap-
peared like Clouds before the Morning-Sun:
The Scenes of Paradife were open'd,--- ſera-
phick Pleaſures and unutterable Delights:
All hail, I cry'd, you unknown Joys, you
unexperienced Pleaſures! compared to you,
what's all I have reliſh'd till now: what's
earthly Beauty and Harmony? what's all
that Mortals call charming and attractive?
I never lived till now: I knew no more
than the Name of Happineſs till now: I
have been in a Dream during all the Days of
my Folly and Vanity; but now I awake to
the Life of Heaven-born Spirits, and taſte
the Joys of Angels.

XXVI. *Importunate Requests for the
Return of GOD to the Soul.*

THOU great and glorious, thou invifible and univerfal Being, art thou no nearer to be approach'd? or do I fearch thee amifs? Is there a Corner of the Creation unvifited by thee, or any Place exempt from thy Prefence? I trace thy Footsteps through Heaven and Earth, but I cannot overtake thee.

Why do I feek thee, if thou art not here?

Or find thee not, if thou art every where?

TELL me, O my GOD, and my All, tell me where thou art to be found; for there is the Place of my Reft. What imaginable Good can fupply thy Abfence? Deprived of thee, all that the World could offer would be like a Jelt to a dying Man, and provoke my Averfion and Difdain. 'Tis a GOD that I feek;

My Wifhes ftoop not to a lower Aim;

Thou, thou haft kindled this immortal Flame,

Which nothing can allay,

ADIEU, adieu to all human Things! Let me find my GOD, the End of all my Wifhes;
Why

XXVI. *of the* H E A R T. 135

Why dost thou keep back the Face of thy
Throne? why does the Cloud and sacred
Darkness conceal thee?

*Thy Voice produc'd the Seas and Spheres,
Bid the Waves roll, and Planets shine;
But nothing like thyself appears
Thro' all these various Works of thine.*

O THOU fairer than all the Works of thy
Hands, wilt thou ever hide thyself from a
Creature that loves and seeks thee with so in-
tense Desire? I appeal to thee, O Lord, are
not my Breathings after thee most hearty and
unfeigned? does not my Soul pant after thee
with a Fervour which cannot be extinguished,
and a Sincerity which cannot be disguised?

*For thee I pine, and am for thee undone;
As drooping Flowers that want their Parent
Sun.*

How do my Spirits languish for thee!
No Similitudes can express the Vehemence
of my Desires: Wealth and Glory, Friends
and Pleasure lose their Names compared to
thee. To follow thee I would leave them all
behind; I would leave the whole Creation,

and bid the Fields and sparkling Skies adieu. Let the Heavens and Earth be no more, while thou endurest for ever, I can want no Support. My Being itself, with all its Blessedness, depends intirely on thee.

PLACE me far from the Bounds of all Creation, remote from all Existence but thy own; in that ineffable Solitude let me be lost, let me expatiate there for ever, let me run the endless Rounds of Bliss;--- but, alas! I flatter myself in vain with Scenes of unattainable Happiness. I will search thee then, where I hope thou mayst be found, I cast my Eyes to the bright Regions above, and almost envy the happy Beings that see thy Face unveil'd: I search thee in the flow'ry Meadows, and listen for thee among the murmuring Springs: Then, silent and abstracted from human Things, I search thee in holy Contemplation; 'tis all in vain: nor Fields, nor Floods, nor Clouds, nor Stars reveal thee.

YE happy Spirits, that meet his Smiles, and hear his Voice, direct a mournful Wanderer while I seek him whom my Soul loves, while I sigh and complain, and cast my languishing Eyes to yonder happy Mansions; fain would I penetrate the starry Pavilions, and look thro' the separating Firmament: Oh! that thou
wouldst

XXVI. *of the* HEART. 137

wouldst divide the Clouds, that thou wouldst rend the Heavens, and give me one Glimpse of thy Glory ! that thou wouldst display thy Beauty, and in the Midst of these earthly Scenes of amusing Vanity, give me one Moment's Interval of celestial Blessedness.

*One Look of Mercy from thy Eye,
One Whisper of thy Voice,
Exceed a whole Eternity
Employ'd in carnal Joys.*

*Cou'd I the spacious Earth command,
Or the more boundless Sea,
For one dear Hour at thy Right-hand
I'd give them both away.*

IF Things were put into just Balances, and computed aright, for the first Moment of this Satisfaction I am ready to say, The whole Creation would be cheaply lost : How gladly would I resign all for such a Bliss. Adieu to human Things ; let me find my God, the End of all my Wishes : 'Tis he whom I seek, 'tis he alone can satisfy my infinite Desires. Oh ! why dost thou withdraw ? why thus long conceal thyself ? where dost thou retire ? nor Earth, nor Heaven reply to my repeated Calls.

LET

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LET me invoke thee by every gracious Title, My God, and the God of my Fathers: From one Generation to another thou hast been our Dwelling-place; the Claim has descended from Age to Age; thy Covenant has been establish'd with us, and thy Faithfulness remains unblemish'd. Oh! forget not thy Covenant, forget not the Blessings entail'd on me; forget not the Prayers and Tears by which my pious Ancestors have engaged thy Mercy for me, forget not their Vows and solemn Dedication of me to thee: Oh! recal thy antient Favours, and renew thy former Mercy to a Family which has been thine in a Succession of Ages.

LET me invoke thee now by a nearer Propriety: My Covenant God, my Father, and my Friend! if by all those tender Names I have ever known thee, forget me not. By those sacred Engagements, O Lord, I intreat thy Return. If all thy past Favours were real, if all was waking Bliss, and not a gay Delusion, O restore my Heaven again. Life of my Soul, Light of my Eyes, return; Come and bring all thy sacred Consolations; once again let me experience those holy Joys that thy Presence imparts; once again let me hear thy Voice, and once again be blest with thy Smiles.

Oh!

*Oh! hear, and to my longing Eyes
Restore thy wonted Light;
And suddenly; or I shall sleep
In everlasting Night.*

BLESSED Saviour, in thee we behold the Face of GOD as a reconciled Father; and dost thou withdraw thyself? O how welcome will thy Returns be? How like the Breakings of immortal Day will thy Presence cheer me? How dearly shall I prize my Happiness? How fearful shall I be of every thing that would offend thee? How joyful in the blessed Discovery and Possession of thy Love! I'd whisper my Bliss to the list'ning Streams and Groves:

*I'd carve our Passion on the Bark,
And every wounded Tree
Shall drop, and bear some mystick Mark
That JESUS died for me.*

*The Swains shall wonder when they read
Inscrib'd on all the Grove,
That Heaven itself came down and bled
To win a Mortal's Love.*

BUT

BUT why do I flatter myself with these delightful Scenes? I find thee absent still: I mourn and complain as one unpity'd: What is Life while thou art absent? Oh! return and bless me with thy Presence, thou who knowest my Distress, and art acquainted with my secret Cares. Thou who art the Witness of my Midnight Sighs, and dost hear when at the dawning Day I call thee; but still thou answerest not, and seemest deaf to my Prayers. I am, 'tis true, a worthless Wretch; but vile as I am, thou hast in thy immense Compassion brought me into Covenant with thee: *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.*

*He is my Sun, tho' he refuse to shine;
 Tho' for a Moment he depart,
 I dwell for ever on his Heart,
 For ever he on mine.*

NOTHING can break the sacred Union; but for this Confidence I were undone; but for this Beam of Hope I were lost in eternal Darkness. *Why art thou disquieted, O my Soul, and why art thou cast down within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him for the Light of his Countenance. I shall yet welcome*
his

XXVI. *of the* HEART. 141

his Return, I shall yet hear his chearing Voice, and meet his favourable Smiles.

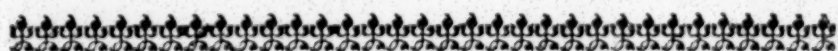
BUT why, O my God, this long Suspence? Why do these Intervals of Night and Darkeness abide upon me, and torment my Heart so long? Wilt thou deny a Bliss so easily granted? I ask not more than is lawful for Mortality to wish: I ask not the Visions of Angels here below; nor the Beatitudes of perfected Spirits: I ask but what thou hast bid me seek, and given me Hopes to obtain: I ask that sacred Fellowship, that ineffable Communion with which thou favourest thy Saints.

OH! let me hear those heavenly Whispers that give them the Foretastes of immortal Pleasures: Let me be sensible of those divine Approaches that kindle celestial Ardor in their Souls: Let me meet those Beams that darken all mortal Beauty: Let me enjoy, at this earthly Distance, those Smiles that are the Bliss of Angels in Heaven. Tho' 'tis but darkly, and afar off, yet let me feel their Influence; 'twill brighten the Passage of Life, it will direct me thro' its Mazes, and gild its rough and gloomy Paths: 'Twill raise the Flames of sacred Love, it will waken the divine Principle within me, and set it a glowing thro' all my Powers. I abandon,
I shall.

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I shall forget the Vanities below, and the
Glories of the World will be no more. But
while thou, O my GOD, hidest thy Face, I
lose my Sun, I languish and die : Yet to thee
I will lift up my Eyes, to thee I lift up my Soul.

*Come, Lord, and never from me go ;
This World's a darksome Place :
I find no Pleasure here below
When thou dost veil thy Face.*



XXVII. *Breathing after GOD, and
weary of the World.*

*'TIS no mean Beauty of the Ground
That has allur'd my Eyes ;
I faint beneath a nobler Wound,
Nor Love below the Skies.*

IF Words can reach the Heights of Love
and Gratitude, let me pour out the secret Ar-
dour of my Soul ; O let it not offend thy
Greatness, that Dust and Vanity adores and
loves thee. If thou hadst given me other Ca-
pacities, and form'd any thing more suitable
to my Wishes, I might have found a lower
Happi-

XXVII. *of the* HEART. 143

Happiness, and been content with something below the infinite Deity; but the scanty Creation affords nothing to satisfy me, and I follow thee by a divine Instinct and mere Necessity of Nature.

MY Life is useless, and my Being insignificant without thee: My Reason has no proper Employment; Love, the noblest Passion of my Soul, has no Object to answer its Dignity. I am reduced to absolute Poverty; my Nature is entirely ruined, I am lost, eternally lost, undone, and abandon'd to Despair, if I am deprived of thee. There can be no Reparation made for an infinite Loss; nothing can be instead of GOD to my Soul.

I HAVE willingly renounced all Things else for thy sake: All the Sentiments of Tenderness and Delight, that my Soul ever feels for any earthly Object, is mere Indifference, compared to my Love for thee; and it grows into Hatred when that Object stands as thy Rival or Competitor. This is the conquering, the superior Flame that draws in and swallows up all the other Ardours of my Nature. My Engagements with all terrestrial Things, are broken; the Names of Father, of Brother, or of Friend, are no more: Abstracted from thee, these tender Titles give me neither Confidence,

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fidence, nor Joy, and are mere insignificant Names, but as thou dost give them an Emphasis; they are nothing at all without thee; and with thee, what finite Good can be an Addition?

*The Soul can hold no more, for God is all,
He only equals its capacious Grasp,
He only overfills to Spaces infinite.*

THOU art my God, and I have enough; my Soul is satisfied, I am entirely at rest. Divide the vain, the perishing Creation to the miserable Wretches that ask no other Portion: Let them unenvy'd possess the Honours, and Riches, and Pleasures of the World; with a lavish Hand divide them away: These Things are but as the Dust of the Balance to the happy Soul that knows what the Light of thy Countenance imports. After that there can be no Relish left for the low Delights of Mortality.

*Lost in the high Enjoyments of thy Love,
What glorious Mortal could my Envy move?*

You ineffable Delectations of divine Love,
let me have no Sentiment of Pleasure left
but

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but for you. My God revealing his Glories and his Graces in *Jesus Christ* his Son, is sufficient for my eternal Entertainment.

WHAT if all former Ideas of visible Things were wiped from my Soul? what if I had no Imagination, no Memory, no Traces left of any thing but the Joys I have found in thy Presence, and the Assurance of thy everlasting Favour? those are the only past Moments I recal with Pleasure, and oh! let all the vast Eternity before me be spent in these Satisfaction.

VANISH, ye terrestrial Scenes! fly away, ye vain objects of Sense! I resign all those poor and limited Faculties by which you are enjoy'd; let me be insensible to all your Impressions, if they do not lead me to my God. Let *Chaos* come again, and the fair Face of Nature become an universal Blank: let her glowing Beauties all fade away, and those divine Characters she wears be effac'd, I shall yet be happy; the God of Nature, and the Original of all Beauty is my God.

WHAT if the Sun were extinguish'd in the Skies, and all the ethereal Lamps had burnt out their golden Flames, I shall dwell in Light and immortal Day, for my God will be ever with me. When the Groves shall no

I

more

more renew their Verdure, nor the Fields and Vallies boast any longer their flowry Pride; when all these lower Heavens, and this Earth are mingled in universal Ruin, and these material Images of things are no more; I shall see new Regions of Beauty and Pleasure for ever opening themselves in the divine Essence with all their original Glories.

BUT oh! how various, how boundless, how transporting will the Prospect be? oh! when shall I bid adieu to Phantoms and Delusions, and converse with eternal Realities? When shall I drink at the Fountain Head of essential Life and Blessedness?

————— and then,

“O what?---But ask not of the Tongues of Men,

“For Angels cannot tell.---let it suffice,

“Thy self, my Soul, shalt feel thy own full Joys,

“And hold them fast for ever.

OH! break my Fetters, for I must be gone.—Bring my Soul out of Prison; I am straiten'd; the whole Creation is too narrow for me; I sicken at this Confinement, and groan and pant for Liberty. How sweet are the Thoughts of Enlargement? My Soul is already on the Wing, and practises imaginary Flights:

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Flights: I seem to reach the Heaven of Heavens, where God himself resides. It is good for me to be here. —

*But ah! how soon the Clouds of mortal Sense
Arise, and veil the charming Vision? —*

ALAS! what do I here in this waste and dreadful Wilderness? This dismal Region, where our Delights are vanishing, and the very Glimpses of future Felicity we enjoy are so soon over-shaded, and surrounded with real Horrors? Alas! what do I here, wasting that Breath in Sighs and endless Complaints, that was given me to bless and praise the infinite Creator? Alas! what do I here, among Strangers and Enemies, in this wild inhospitable Place, far from my Home, and all the Objects of my solid Delight?

*My Wishes, Hopes, my Pleasures, and my Love,
My Thoughts, and noblest Passions are above.*

WHAT do I here in the Dominions of Death and Sin, in the Precincts and Range of the Powers of Darkness? Here they lay their Toils, and set their fatal Snares; but, Lord, what Part have they in me? I have bid defiance to the Powers of Darkness in thy

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Strength, and renounced my Share in the Vanities of the World, I am a Subject of another Kingdom, and dare not enter into any Terms of Peace and Amity with the irreconcilable Adversaries of God and my Soul, which inhabit these treacherous and sinful Regions. *The Friendship of this World is Enmity with God.* Death and Destruction are in its Smiles; I stand on my Guard, and am every Moment in danger of Surprise: Oh! when will my Deliverance come from on high?

-----*When, my Soul,
O when shall thy Release from cumb'rous Flesh
Pass the great Seal of Heaven? What happy
Hour
Shall give thy Thoughts a loöse to soar and trace
The intellectual World?*

WHAT glorious Scenes shall open when once this mortal Partition falls, when these Walls of Clay shall totter and sink down into Dust? Ye Waters of Life, ye Torrents of immortal Pleasure, how impetuously will you then roll in upon me, and swell and fill up all the Capacities of Joy in my Nature? Every Faculty shall then be fill'd, and every Wish shall end in unutterable Fruition.

When

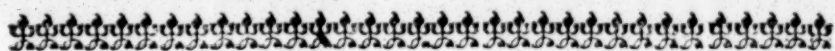
When I awake into immortal Light, I shall be satisfied with thy Likeness. These expressless Desires will die into everlasting Raptures: Hope and languishing Expectation will be no more; but present, compleat, and unbounded Satisfaction will surround me. My God, my God himself shall be my infinite, my unutterable Joy: All the Avenues of Pleasure shall be open before me, the Scenes of Beauty and Prospects of Delight. Everlasting Joy shall be upon my Head, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away for ever.

THERE will be no more Intervals of Grief and Sin; Sin, that insupportable Evil, that worst, that heaviest Burden: Here the painful and deadly Pressure lies: 'Tis this that hangs as a Weight on all my Joys; but, thanks be to my God, I can say, I sincerely detest and hate this vilest of Slaveries, this cursed Bondage of Corruption; I long for the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; I groan under this Load of Flesh, this Burden of Mortality, this Body of Death.

BUT grant, O Lord, I may with patience continue in well-doing, and at last obtain Glory and Immortality thro' my Redeemer's Righteousness. *Sanctify me through thy word*

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of Truth *, remember this Request of my glorious Advocate.



XXVIII. *A Prayer for speedy Sanctification.*

O Lord God, great and holy, all-sufficient, and full of Grace, if thou shouldst bid me form a Wish, and take whatsoever in Heaven or Earth I had to ask, it should not be the Kingdoms of this World, nor the Crowns of Princes; no, nor should it be the Wreaths of Martyrs, nor the Thrones of Archangels: My first Request is to be made holy; this is my highest Concern. Rectify the Disorders Sin has made in my Soul, and renew thy Image there; let me be satisfy'd with thy Likeness. Thou hast compass'd my Paths with Mercy in all other Respects, and I am discontented with nothing but my own Heart; because it is so unlike the Image of thy Holiness, and so unfit for thy immediate Presence.

PERMIT me to be importunate here, O blessed God, and grant the Importunity of my Wishes; let me be favour'd with a gra-

* John 17.

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cious and speedy Answer, for I am dying while I am speaking: The very Breath with which I am calling upon thee, is carrying away a Part of my Life: This Tongue that is now invoking thee, must shortly be silent in the Grave: These Knees that are bent to pay thee Homage, and these Hands that are now lifted to the Most High God for Mercy, must shortly be mould'ring to their original Dust: These Eyes will soon be clos'd in Death, which are now looking up to thy Throne for a Blessing. Oh! prevent the flying Hours with thy Mercy, and let thy Favour out-strip the hasty Moments.

THOU art unchang'd, while rolling Ages pass along; but I am decaying, with every Breath I draw: My whole allotted Time to prepare for Heaven is but a Point, compar'd with thy infinite Duration. The Shortness and Vanity of my present Being, and the Importance of my eternal Concerns, join together to demand my utmost Sollicitude, and give Wings to my warmest Wishes. Before I can utter all my present Desires, the hasty Opportunity perhaps is gone, the golden Minute vanish'd, and the Season of Mercy has taken its everlasting Flight.

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O H ! God of Ages, hear me speedily, and grant my Request while I am yet speaking, my frail Existence will admit of no Delay answer me according to the Shortness of my Duration, and the Exigence of my Circumstances. My Business, of high Importance as it is, yet is limited to the present now, the passing Moment; for all the Powers on Earth cannot promise me the next.

LET not my pressing Importunity therefore offend thee; my Happiness, my everlasting Happiness, my whole Being is concerned in my Success: As much as the Enjoyment of God himself is worth, is at stake.

THOU knowest, O Lord, what Qualifications will fit me to behold thee; thou knowest in what I am defective; thou canst prepare my Soul in an instant, to enter into thy holy Habitation: I breathe now, but the next Moment may be Death; let not that fatal Moment come before I am prepared. The same creating Voice that said, *Let there be Light*, and there was Light, can in the same Manner purify and adorn my Soul, and make me fit for thy own Presence; and my Soul longs to be thus purified and adorned. O Lord, delay not, for every Moment's Interval is a Loss to me, and may be a Loss
unspeak-

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unspeakable and unrepairable. Thy delay cannot be the least Advantage to thee; thy Power and thy Clemency are as full this present Instant, as they will be the next, and my Time as fleeting, and my Wants as pressing.

REMEMBER, O eternal God, my lost Time is for ever lost, and my wasted Hours will never return, my neglected Opportunities can never be recalled; to me they are gone for ever, and cannot be improved; but thou canst change my sinful Soul into Holiness, by a Word, and set me now in the Way to everlasting Improvement.

O LET not the Spirit of God restrain itself, but bless me according to the Fulness of thy own Being, according to the Riches of thy Grace in *Christ Jesus*, according to thy infinite unconceivable Love manifested in that glorious Gift of thy beloved Son, wherein the Fulness of the Godhead was contained: 'Tis thro' his Merit and Mediation I humbly wait for all the unbounded Blessings I want or ask for.

XXIX. *Gratitude for early and peculiar Favours.*

LET me trace back thy Mercy, O my God, from the first early Dawn of Life, and bless thee for the Privileges of my Birth, that it was not in the Lands of Darknes, where no Ray of the Gospel had ever darted its Light ; where the Name of a Saviour never had reach'd my Ears, nor the transporting Tidings of Redemption from eternal Misery had never bless'd my Soul.

BUT how shall I express my Gratitude for that Grace which ordain'd my Lot in this happy Land, one of the Islands of which it was long since prophesied, *they should see thy Glory, and trust in thy Name?* God has enlarged Japhet, even the Islands of the Sea, and made him to dwell in the Tents of Shem, in the Inheritance of *Abraham*. I have my Descent from the *Gentiles*, who were once *Strangers to the Covenant of Grace, Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel* ; but are now brought nigh by the Blood of sprinkling. *Jesus*, the great Peacemaker, hath brought both near to God, and to each other.

I BLESS

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I BLESS thee with all my Powers, for the Privilege of my descent from pious Ancestors ; that thou hast been their Dwelling-place from Generation to Generation, and hast not *taken thy Loving-kindness from their Seed, nor suffer'd thy Faithfulness to fail.*

THOU hast extended thy Mercy to me the last and least of all my Father's House, unworthy to wipe the Feet of the meanest of the Servants of my Lord ; and yet by an absolute Act of Goodness I am brought into thy Family, and number'd with the Children of God. Even so it has seem'd good in thy Sight, who *art gracious to whom thou wilt be gracious.*

I MIGHT have been a Vessel of Wrath, a Trophy to thy Justice, instead of a Monument of thy Mercy : How unsearchable thy Ways ! how uncontroll'd and free ! Thou didst regard me in my low Estate, in more than my original Guilt and Misery ; for I had improv'd the wretched Stock, and been a voluntary, as well as a natural Slave to Sin and Death.

FROM this ignominious Slavery, thou, my great Redeemer, hast ransomed me, and brought me into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God : I was a Stranger, and thou
didst

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didst take me in; naked, and thou hast clothed me with the spotless Robes of thy own Righteousness; I was hungry, and thou didst feed me; thirsty, and thou didst give me to drink of the Fountain of Life.

WHAT am I, O Lord, and what is my Father's House, that thou hast dealt thus graciously with me, in entering into an everlasting Covenant, sign'd and seal'd, even sensibly seal'd to my Soul by the Witness of the Spirit? Lord, why me rather than many that were Companions of my early Vanities and Folly? Whence were the Motives drawn but from thy sovereign Pleasure? How many are pass'd by, that could have done thee more Service, and return'd a warmer Acknowledgment to thy distinguishing Bounty?

YE Spirits of just Men made perfect, ye ransom'd Nations, triumphant above, instruct me in the Art of celestial Eloquence; tell me in what Strains of sacred Harmony you express your Gratitude for this glorious Redemption, while in exalted Raptures you sing *to him that lov'd and wash'd you in his own Blood, and made you Kings and Priests to God.*

XXX.

XXX. *Aspiring after the Vision of
God in Heaven.*

I Beseech thee, shew me thy Glory : It was a Mortal in a State of Frailty and Imperfection that made this bold, but pious Request ; which I repeat on different Terms : Since none can see thy face and live, let me die to behold it. This is the only Request I have to make, and this will I seek after, that I may behold the Beauty of the Lord : not as I have seen it in thy Sanctuary below ; but in full Perfection and Splendour, as thou art seen by Seraphs and Cherubs, by Angels, and Archangels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

O MY God, forgive my Importunity : Thou hast commanded me to love thee with all my Heart, my Soul, my Strength, and hast by thy Spirit kindled the sacred Flame in my Breast : From this rises my present Impatience ; from hence the Ardour of my Desires spring. Can I love thee, and be satisfied at this Distance from thee ? Can I love thee, and not long to behold thee in perfect Excellence and Beauty ? Is it a Crime to press forward to the End for which I was created ?
All

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All my Wishes and my Hopes of Happiness terminate in thee.

DOES not the thirsty Traveller pine for some refreshing Stream? would not the Weary be at rest, or the wretched Captive be free? and shall not my thirsty, weary, captive Soul long for Refreshment, Liberty, and Rest? I am but a Stranger, a Pilgrim here, and have no abiding Place; this is not my Rest, my Home; and yet if thou hast any Employment for me, tho' the meanest Office in thy Family, I will not repine at my Stay.

BUT, O Lord, thou hast no need of such worthless Service as I can pay thee; thy Angels are Spirits, thy Ministers Flames of Fire; thousands of thousands stand before thee, and ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto thee; they attend thy Orders, and fly at thy Command. O deliver me from this Burden of Mortality, and I will serve thee with a Zeal as pure and active as theirs.

I CAN speak of thy Loving-kindness to the Children of Men in a very imperfect Manner; but then I will join with the celestial Quire, in praising thee, and rehearse to listening Angels what thou hast done for my Soul. Here I have a thousand Interruptions from the delightful Work, a thousand cold and dark-

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darkſom Intervals, when my Heart and Tongue are both untun'd, a thouſand neceſſary Diſtractions that riſe from the Miſeries of Mortality ; but when theſe Intervals of Grief and Sin ſhall ceaſe, my Soul ſhall dwell at Eaſe, and be for ever glad, and rejoice in thy Salvation.



XXXI. *A Surrender of the Soul to*
GOD.

COMMAND me what thou wilt, O Lord, give me but Strength to obey thee ; be thy Terms never ſo ſevere, O let us never part. I reſign my Will, my Liberty, my Choice to thee ; I ſtand diveſted of the World, and aſk only thy Love, as my Inheritance. Give or deny me what thou wilt, I leave all the Circumſtances of my future Time in thy Hands : Let the Lord guide me continually ; here I am, do with me what ſeemeth good in thy Sight, only do not ſay, *Thou haſt no Pleaſure in me.*

LET me not live to diſhonour thee, to bring a Reproach on thy Name, to profane the Blood of the Son of God, and grieve the
I Spirit

Spirit of Grace. O take not thy Loving-kindness from me, nor suffer thy Faithfulness to fail. Thou hast sworn by thy Holiness, and thou wilt not lie to the Seed of thy Servants; thou hast sworn that the Generation of the Righteous shall *be blessed: Vest me with this Character*, O my God, and fulfil this Promise to a worthless Creature.



XXXII. *Trust and Reliance on the divine Promises.*

O Let not my Importunity offend thee, for 'tis the Importunity of Faith; 'tis my stedfast Belief in thy Word that makes me persist: Thy Word and thy Oath, *the two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie*, give me *strong Consolation*.

'Tis this that makes me press forward to thy Throne, and with Confidence lay hold on thy Strength, thy Wisdom, and thy Faithfulness, on thy Goodness and tender Compassion; those glorious Attributes for which *the Children of Men put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings*. 'Tis thy Glory to be the Confidence of the Ends of the Earth, and

was

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it was long since predicted, *That in thy Name
the Gentiles should trust.*

*Kind Guardian of the World, our heavenly Aid,
To whom the Vows of all Mankind are paid---*

We pay thee the highest Homage, and exalt
thy infinite Attributes by Faith and Confidence in thee.

I KNOW that *thou art*, and believe thee
a Rewarder of them that diligently seek thee.
I will never quit my Hold of thy Promises,
there I fix my Hopes: I will not let a Tittle
go, nor part with a Mite of the glorious Treasure.
I humbly hope I have a rightful Claim;
thou art my God, and the God of my religious
Ancestors, the God of my Mother, the
God of my pious Father: Dying and breathing
out his Soul, he gave me to thy Care, he
put me into thy gracious Arms, and deliver'd
me up to thy Protection. He told me thou
wouldst never leave nor forsake me; he triumph'd
in thy long-experienc'd Faithfulness
and Truth, and gave his Testimony for thee
with his latest Breath.

AND now, O Lord God of my Fathers,
whose Mercy has descended from Age to Age,
whose Truth has remain'd unblemish'd, and

inviolable, and whose Love remains without Decay, O Lord, the faithful God and the true, keeping Covenant and Mercy to a thousand Generations, let me find that Protection and Blessing that the Prayers of my dying Father engag'd for me : Now in the Time of my Distress, be a present Help ; and if thou wilt this once deliver me, thou alone shalt be my future Trust, my Counsellor, and Hope ; to thee I will immediately apply myself, and look on the whole Force of created Nature as insignificant. To thee I will devote all the Blessings thou shalt give me, my Time, my Life, my Whole of this World's Goods ; whatever Share thou shalt graciously allot me, shall surely be the Lord's.

OH ! hearken to the Vows of my Distress, and for thy own Honour deliver me from this Perplexity which thou knowest, and reveal to me the Abundance of Mercy and Truth.

'TWAS my Dependence on thy Promise and Fidelity that brought me into this Exigence ; I stagger'd not at thy Promises thro' Unbelief, but boldly ventur'd on the Credit of thy Word : I took it for my Security, and can the Strength of *Israel* repent ? Canst thou
break

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break thy Covenant, and alter the thing that is gone out of thy Mouth?

O God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, this is thy Name for ever, and this thy Memorial to all Generations; the God before whom my Fathers walked, the God that fed me all my Life long till now, and the Angel that redeemed me from all Evil, bleſs me. Let the God of Jacob be my Help, let the Almighty bleſs me; let the Bleſſings of my Father prevail above the Bleſſing of his Progenitors to the utmoſt Bounds of the ever-laſting Hills.

BLESS me according to thy own Greatneſs, according to the unſearchable Riches of thy Grace in *Chriſt Jeſus*; he is the Spring of all my Hope, in whom all the Promiſes of God are Yea and Amen; he is the true and faithful Witneſs, and has by his Death ſeal'd the divine Veracity, and is become Surety for the Honour and Faithfulneſs of the Moſt High God. To this alſo the Holy Ghoſt, the Spirit of Truth bears witneſs.

OH! great *Jehovah*, Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, the Lord God Omnipotent, hear and grant my Requeſt, for the Glory of thy mighty Name, that Name which Saints and Angels bleſs and love: Let thy Perfections be

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manifest to the Children of Men; let them say, there is a God that judgeth in the Earth; let them confess thou dost keep thy Covenant with the Seed of thy Servants, that thy Righteousness is from Age to Age, and thy Salvation shall never be abolish'd; let them see and acknowledge, that in the Fear of the Lord is strong Confidence, and his Children have a Place of Refuge,

*Unshaken as the sacred Hill,
And firm as Mountains be;
Firm as a Rock the Soul shall rest
That leans, O Lord, on thee.*

Memorandum.

THIS ACT of Faith in God was fully answer'd, and I leave my Testimony, that *the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, and he knoweth them that put their Trust in him.*

XXXIII. *Application to the divine Truth.*

HOWever intricate and hopeless my present Distress may be to human Views, why should I limit the Almighty? or why should
the

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the Holy One of *Israel* limit himself? Nature and Necessity are thine ; thou speakest the Word, and it comes to pass ; no Obstacle can oppose the Omnipotence of thy Will, nor make thy Designs ineffectual.

Is thy Hand at all shorten'd since the glorious Period, when thy mighty Power, and thy stretched Arm form'd the Heavens and Earth ; when these spacious Skies were spread at thy Command, and this heavy Globe fix'd on its airy Pillars ?

The strong Foundations of the Earth

Of old by thee were laid ;

Thy Hands the beauteous Arch of Heaven

With wondrous Skill hath made.

AND these shall wax old as a Garment, as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be chang'd ; but shouldst thou, like these, decay, where were the Hopes of them that confide in thee ? If in all Generations thy Perfections were not the same, what Consolation could the Race of Men draw from the antient Records of thy wonderful Works ? Why are we told, *thou didst divide the Sea, to make a Path for thy People thro' the mighty Waters ; that thou didst rain Bread from Hea-*

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ven, and dissolve the flinty Rock in chrystal Rills to give thy chosen Nation Drink?

THOU art he that distinguished *Noah* in the universal Deluge, and preserv'd the floating Ark amidst Winds, and Rains, and tumultuous Billows.

'Twas thy protecting Care that led *Abraham* from his Kindred and his native Country, and brought him safely to the promis'd Land.

THOU didst accompany *Jacob* in his Journey to *Padan-aran*, and give him Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, till greatly increas'd in Substance: He return'd to his Father's House, he wrestled for a Blessing, he wrestled with the Almighty, and prevail'd.

WITH *Joseph* thou wentest down into *Egypt*, and didst deliver him out of all his Adversities, till he forgat his Sorrows, and all the Toil of his Father's House.

THOU didst remember thy People in the *Egyptian* Bondage, and look with pitying Eyes on their Affliction; and after four hundred and thirty Years, on the very Day thou hadst promis'd, didst release and bring them out with Triumph and Miracles. Thy Presence went with them in a Pillar of a Cloud by Day, and a protecting Fire by Night:
Thy

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Thy conquering Hand drove out great and potent Nations, and gave them an entire Possession of the Land promis'd to their Fathers: Nor didst thou fail in the least Circumstance of all the good things thou hadst promised.

WHAT a Cloud of Witnesses stand on Record? *Joshua* and *Gideon*, *Jeptka* and *Sampson*, who thro' Faith obtain'd Promises.

THOU didst command the Ravens to feed thy holy Prophet; and at the Word of a Prophet, didst sustain the Widow's Family with a Handful of Meal.

THOU didst walk with the three *Hebrews* in the fiery Furnace: Thou wast present with *Daniel* in the Lion's Den to deliver him, because he trusted in thee.

IN what Instance has the Prayer of Faith been rejected? Where were the Righteous forsaken? Who can charge God without charging him foolishly? What Injustice has been found in the Judge of all the Earth? His glorious Titles have stood unblemish'd from Generation to Generation; nor can any of his Perfections decay, or rolling Years make a Change on the *Antient of Days*.

ARE not his Words clear and distinct, without a double Meaning, or the least Deceit? Are they not such as may justly secure

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my Confidence? Such as would satisfy me from the Mouth of Man, unconstant Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils, and his Foundation in the Dust, unstable as Water, and fleeting as a Shadow? And can I so slowly assent to the Words of the Most High? Shall I trust impotent Man, that has neither Wisdom nor Might to accomplish his Designs, that cannot call the next Breath or Motion his own, nor promise himself a Moment in all Futurity? Can I rest on these feeble Props, and yet tremble and despond when I have the Veracity of the eternal God to secure and support me?

I KNOW he will not break his Covenant, nor suffer his Faithfulness to fail: I dare attest it in the Face of Earth and Hell, I dare stake my All for Time and Eternity on this glorious Truth; a Truth which Hell cannot blemish, nor all its Malice contradict.

EXERT yourselves, ye Powers of Darkness, bring in your Evidence, collect your Instances, begin from the first Generations, since the World was peopled, and Men began to call on the Name of the Lord; when did they call in vain? When did the Holy One of *Israel* fail the Expectation of the humble and contrite Spirit? Point out in your blackest

Cha-

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Characters the dismal Period, when the Name of the Lord was no more a Refuge to them that trusted in him? Let the Annals of Hell be produc'd, let them mark the dreadful Day, and distinguish it with eternal Triumphs.

IN vain you search; for neither Heaven, nor Earth, nor Hell have ever been Witness to the least Deviation from Truth or Justice: The Almighty shines with unblemish'd Glory, to the Confusion of Hell, and the Consolation of those that put their Trust in him.

ON thy eternal Truth and Honour I entirely cast myself; if I am deceiv'd, I am deceiv'd: Angels and Archangels are deluded too; they, like me, have no Dependance beyond the divine Veracity for their Blessedness and Immortality; they hang all their Hopes on his Goodness and Immutability; if that fails, the celestial Paradise vanishes, and all its Glories are extinct; the golden Palaces sink, and the seraphick Thrones must totter and fall. Where are your Crowns, ye Spirits Elect? Where are your Songs and your Triumphs, if the Truth of God can fail? A mere Possibility of that would darken the Fields of Light, and turn the Voice of Melody into Grief and Lamentation.

WHAT

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WHAT Pangs would rise, even thro' all the Regions of Blessedness, what Diffidence and Fear would shake the Heart of every Inhabitant, what Agonies surprize them all, could the Word of the most High God be cancell'd? The Pillars of Heaven might then tremble, and the everlasting Mountains bow, the celestial Foundations might be mov'd from their Place, and that noblest Structure of the Hands of God be *Chaos*, and eternal Emptiness.

BUT for ever *just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints; blessed are all they that put their Trust in thee*; for thou art a certain Refuge in the Day of Distress, and under the Shadow of thy Wings I will rejoice. *My Soul shall make her boast in the Lord, and triumph in his Salvation: I call'd on him in my Distress, and he has deliver'd me from all my Fears.*----Hallelujah.

*Here I dismiss my carnal Hope,
My fond Desires recall;
I give my mortal Interests up,
And make my God my All.*

XXXIV. *Glory to GOD for Salvation
by JESUS, and his Blood.*

LET me give Glory to God before I die, and take Shame and Confusion to myself. I ascribe my Salvation to the free and absolute Goodness of God. Not by the Strength of Reason, or any natural Inclination to Virtue, but *by the Grace of God I am what I am*. O my Redeemer, be the Victory, be the Glory thine. I expect eternal Life and Happiness from thee, not as a Debt, but a free Gift, a promised Act of Bounty. How poor would my Expectations be, if I only looked to be rewarded according to those Works which my own Vanity, or the Partiality of others, have called *Good*, and which, if examin'd by the divine Purity, would prove but specious Sins? As such I renounce them: Pardon them, gracious Lord, and I ask no more; nor can hope for that, but thro' the Satisfaction which hath been made to divine Justice for the Sins of the World.

O JESUS, my Saviour, what Harmony dwells in thy Name! celestial Joy, immortal Life is in the Sound.

Sweet

*Sweet Name ! in thy each Syllable
A thousand blest'd Arabia's dwell ;
Mountains of Myrrh, and Beds of Spices,
And ten thousand Paradises.*

LET Angels set this Name to their golden Harps ; let the Redeemed of the Lord for ever magnify it.

O MY propitious Saviour, where were my Hopes but for thee ; How desperate, how undone were my Circumstances ? I look on myself in every View I can take with Horror, and Contempt. I was born in a State of Misery and Sin, and in my best Estate am altogether Vanity. With the utmost Advantages I can boast, I shrink back, I tremble to appear before unblemish'd Majesty. O thou in whose Name the *Gentiles* trust, be my Refuge in that awful Hour. To thee I come, my only Confidence and Hope. Let the Blood of sprinkling, let the Seal of the Covenant be on me. Cleanse me from my original Stain, and my contracted Impurity, and adorn me with the Robes of thy Righteousness, by which alone I expect to stand justified before infinite Justice and Purity.

O ENTER

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O ENTER not into Judgment with me, for the best Actions of my Life cannot bear thy Scrutiny; some secret Blemish has stain'd all my Glory. My Devotion to God has been mingled with Levity and Irreverence; my Charity to Man with Pride and Ostentation. Some latent Defect has attended my best Actions, and those very Things which perhaps have been highly esteem'd by Men, have deserv'd Contempt in the Sight of God.

“ *When I survey the wond'rous Cross*
 “ *On which the Prince of Glory dy'd;*
 “ *My richest Gain I count my Loss,*
 “ *And pour Contempt on all my Pride.*

“ *Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,*
 “ *Save in the Cross of CHRIST, my God:*
 “ *All the vain things that charm me most*
 “ *I sacrifice them to thy Blood.”*



April. 30. 1735.

XXXV. *A Review of divine Mercy
 and Faithfulness.*

I Am now setting to my Seal that God is true, and leaving this as my last Testimony

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mony to the divine Veracity. I can from numerous Experiences assert his Faithfulness, and witness to the Certainty of his Promises. *The Word of the Lord is try'd, and he is a Buckler to all those that put their Trust in him.*

O come, all you that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he has done for my Soul; I will ascribe Righteousness to my Maker, and leave my Record for a People yet unborn, that the Generation to come may rise up and praise him.

INTO whatever Distress his wise Providence has brought me, I have called on the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my Fears; I trusted in God, and he saved me. Oh! let my Experience stand a Witness to them that hope in his Mercy; let it be to the Lord for a Praise and a Glory.

I KNOW not where to begin the Recital of thy numerous Favours. Thou hast hid me in the Secret of thy Pavilion, from the Pride of Man, and from the Strife of Tongues, when by a thousand Follies I have merited Reproach: Thou hast graciously protected me, when the Vanity of my Friends, or the Malice of my Enemies might have stain'd my Reputation: Thou hast covered me with thy
Feathers,

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Feathers, and under thy Wings have I trusted: Thy Truth has been my Shield and my Buckler; to thee I owe the Blessing of a clear and unblemish'd Name, and not to my own Conduct, nor the Partiality of my Friends.—Glory be to thee, O Lord.

THOU hast led me thro' a thousand Labyrinths, and enlighten'd my Darkness. When Shades and Perplexity furrounded me, my Light has broke forth out of Obscurity, and my Darkness been turn'd into Noon-day. Thou hast been a Guide and a Father to me. When I knew not where to ask Advice, thou hast given me unerring Counsel: *The Secret of the Lord has been with me, and he has shewn me his Covenant.*

IN how many seen and unseen Dangers hast thou deliver'd me? How narrow my Gratitude? How wide thy Mercy? How innumerable are thy Thoughts of Love? How infinite the Instances of thy Goodness? How high above the Ways and Thoughts of Man?

How often hast thou supply'd my Wants, and by thy Bounty confounded my Unbelief? Thy Benefits have surpriz'd and justly reproach my Diffidence; my Faith has often fail'd, but thy Goodness has never fail'd. The World and all its Flatteries have fail'd, my
own

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own Heart and Hopes have fail'd, but thy Mercy endures for ever, thy Faithfulness has never fail'd.

THE Strength of *Israel* has never deceiv'd me, nor made me ashamed of my Confidence. Thou hast never been as a deceitful Brook, or as Waters that fail to my Soul.

IN Loving-kindness, in Truth, and in very Faithfulness, thou hast afflicted me: Oh! how unwillingly hast thou seem'd to grieve me? With how much Indulgence has the Punishment been mix'd? Love has appear'd thro' the Disguise of every Frown: its Beams have glimmer'd thro' the darkest Night; by every Affliction thou hast been still drawing me nearer to thy self, and removing my carnal Props, that I may lean with more Assurance on the eternal Rock.

THY Love has been my leading Glory from the first intricate Steps of Life: The first undesigning Paths I trod were mark'd and guarded by the Vigilance of thy Love; oh! whither else had my Sin and Folly led me?

How often have I try'd and experienc'd thy Clemency, and found an immediate Answer to my Prayers? Thou hast often literally fulfilled thy Word: I have a fresh Instance of thy Faithfulness again: Thou hast
made

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made me triumph in thy Goodness, and given a new Testimony to the Veracity of thy Promises.

AND after all, what Ingratitude, what Insensibility reigns in my Heart? Oh! cancel it by the Blood of the Covenant: Root out this monstrous Infidelity that still returns after the fullest Evidence of thy Truth. Thou hast graciously condescended to answer me in my own Time and Way, and yet I am again doubting thy Faithfulness and Care. *Lord, pity me, I believe, O help my Unbelief.* Go on to succour, go on to pardon, and at last conquer my Diffidence. Let me hope against Hope, and in the greatest Perplexity give Glory to God by believing what my own Experience has so often found--*That the Strength of Israel will not lie; nor is he as Man, that he should repent.*

WHILE I have Memory and Thought let his Goodness dwell on my Soul. Let me not forget the Depth of my Distress, the Anguish and Importunity of my Vows: When every human Help fail'd, and all was Darkness and Perplexity, then God was all my Stay. Then I knew no Name but his, and he alone knew my Soul in Adversity. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.

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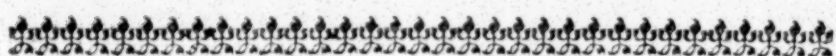
- “ *Long as I live I'll bless thy Name,*
 “ *My King, and God of Love ;*
 “ *My Work and Joy shall be the same*
 “ *In the bright Worlds above.*

I HAVE yet a thousand, and ten thousand Deliverances to recount, ten thousand unask'd-for Mercies to recal : no Moment of my Life has been destitute of thy Care ; no Accident has found me unguarded by thy watchful Eye, or neglected by thy Providence. Thou hast been often found, unsought by my ungrateful Heart, and thy Favours have surprized me with great and unexpected Advantages : Thou hast compell'd me to receive the Blessings my foolish Humour despised, and my corrupt Will would fain have rejected. Thou hast stopp'd thy Ears to the Desires which would have ruined and undone me, when I might justly have been left to my own Choice, for the Punishment of my many Sins and Follies. How great my Guilt ! how infinite thy Mercy !

HITHERTO God has help'd, and here I set up a Memorial to that Goodness which has never abandon'd me to the Malice and Stratagems of my infernal Foes, nor left me a Prey to human Craft or Violence. The Glory of his Providence has often surpriz'd me,

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me, when groping in thick Darknefs. With a potent Voice he has faid, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* He has made his Goodnefs pafs before me, and loudly proclaimed his Name, *the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,* To him be Glory for ever. *Amen.*



XXXVI. *Some daily Experiences of the gracious Methods of divine Providence, to me the least and most unworthy of all the Servants of my Lord.*

FIRST WEEK*.

I.

EVERY Day's Experience reproaches my Unbelief, and brings me some new Evidence of thy Faithfulness. Thou hast dispell'd my Fears, and, to the Confusion of my spiritual Foes, thou hast heard the Voice of my Distress. But a few Hours ago I was trem-

* *Note,* The Division of these Meditations into sevens by the pious Writer seems to tell us, that these were the devout Thoughts of six Weeks of her Life.

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bling and doubting, if thou wast indeed a God hearing Prayer; and now I have a fresh Instance of thy Goodness, which with a grateful Heart I here record. May the Sense of thy Benefits dwell for ever on my Soul.

II.

THY Mercies are new every Morning; again thou hast given me an Instance of thy Truth; *I trusted in God, and he has deliver'd me; I will love the Lord, because he has heard the Voice of my Supplication; therefore will I call on him as long as I live.*

III.

As for God, his Way is perfect; the Word of the Lord is try'd: He is a Buckler to all that put their Trust in him. He has punctually fulfilled the Word on which I relied: Bless the Lord, O my Soul.

IV.

THY Bounty follows me with an unwearied Course; Language is too faint to express thy Praise: No Eloquence can reach the Subject. My Heart is warm with the pious Reflection; I look upward, and silently breathe out the unutterable Gratitude that melts and rejoices my Soul: I stagger'd at thy Promise thro' Unbelief, and yet thou hast graciously perform'd thy Words. If we sometimes

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times doubt or falter in our Faith, yet he abideth faithful who has promised.

V.

WITH the Morning-light my Health and Peace are renew'd: The chearing Influence of the Sun, and the sweeter Beams of the divine Favour shine on my Tabernacle.— Lord, why me? why am I a ransom'd pardon'd Sinner? --- why am I rejoicing among the Instances of sovereign Grace, and unlimited Clemency?

VI.

I BOASTED in thy Truth, and thou hast not made me ashamed: My infernal Foes are confounded, while my Faith is crown'd with Success.

*Oh! who hath tasted of thy Clemency
In greater Measure and more oft than I?*

VII.

As the Week begun, so it ends with a Series of Mercy: Language and Numbers fail to reckon thy Favours, but this shall be my eternal Employment.

*When Nature fails, and Day and Night
Divide thy Works no more,
My ever thankful Soul, O Lord,
Thy Goodness shall adore.*

SECOND WEEK.

I.

I *Have seen the Goings of God my King in his Sanctuary: But O, how transient the View! my sins turn'd back thy Clemency, and yet I can celebrate the Wonders of forgiving Grace.*

II.

WHAT do I owe thee, O thou great Preserver of Men, for easy and peaceful Sleep, for Nights unmolested with Pain and Anxiety.

Thou round my Bed a Guard dost keep:

Thine Eyes are open while mine sleep,

NOT a Moment slides in which I am unguarded by thy gracious Protection.

III.

THANKS be to God, who hast given me the Victory thro' the Lord *Jesus Christ*. Thou hast delivered me from the Snare of the Fowler, the Craft and Malice of Hell, and kept me back from sinning against thee: Be thine the Victory and Praise. *Hallelujah.*

IV.

O LORD God of *Israel*, happy is the Man that putteth his Trust in thee. I left my Burden at thy Feet, and thou hast sustain'd me; my Cares are dissipated, my Desires answer'd.

O who

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*O who is a God like unto thee, near unto all
that call unto thee?*

V.

THY Strength is manifest in Weakness:
*Not unto me, O Lord, but to thee be all the
Glory.*

*For ever thy dear charming Name,
Shall dwell upon my Tongue,
And JESUS and Salvation be
The Theme of every Song.*

THIS shall be my Employment thro'
an eternal Duration: 'Tis that alone can mea-
sure my Gratitude. The Lord *Jehovah* is
my Strength and Salvation, he also shall be my
Song.

VI.

EVERY Day's Experience confirms my
Faith, and brings a fresh Evidence of thy
Goodness. Thou hast dispell'd my Fears,
and, to the Confusion of my spiritual Foes,
hearken'd to the Voice of my Distress.

VII.

I WILL love the Lord, who has heard
my Supplications. I made my boast in his
Faithfulness, and he has answer'd all my
Expectation.

THIRD WEEK.

I.

MY last Exigence will be the closing Part of Life. Oh! remember me then, my God. Thou who hast led me hitherto, forsake me not at last. Be my Strength when Nature fails, and the Flame of Life is just expiring; let thy Smiles chear that gloomy Hour: Oh! then let thy gentle Voice whisper Peace and ineffable Consolation to my Soul.

II.

In six and in seven Troubles thou hast deliver'd me, and *been a Covert from the Tempest, a Hiding-place from the Wind*: Hitherto God has help'd, and I have dwelt secure; and here I leave a Memorial to thy Praise, a Witness against all my future Distrust of thy Faithfulness and Truth.

III.

EVERY Day of my Life encreases the Sum of thy Mercies: The rising and the setting Sun, in its constant Revolution, can witness the Renewal of thy Favours: Thou wast graciously present in an imminent Danger; by thee my Bones have been kept intire, and thou hast not suffer'd me to dash my Foot against a Stone,

IV.

IV.

Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who heals thy Diseases, and pardons all thy Sins. O thou the great Physician of my Body, as well as of my distemper'd Soul, thou hast restor'd and saved me from death and Hell. Blessed Jesus, thou hast taken my Infirmities, and born my Sickness; the Chastisement of my Peace was on thee, and by thy Stripes I am healed.

V.

I SUBSCRIBE to thy Truth; O Lord; I attest it in Contradiction to infernal Malice, to all the hellish Suggestions that would tempt my Heart to Diffidence and Unbelief, even against repeated Experience, against the fullest Evidence of the divine Veracity.

VI.

OH! thou, who never slumberest nor sleepest, this Night thy watchful Care has kept me from a threatening Danger: Thy Eyes were open, while I was sleeping, secure beneath the Covert of thy Wings.

VII.

ANOTHER, and a greater Deliverance has crown'd the Day: I have found thy Grace sufficient in an Hour of Temptation, thy Strength
has

has been manifest in my Weakness. Thine was the Conquest; be the Crown and the Glory thine for ever. By thee I have triumph'd over the Stratagems of Hell; *not unto me, but to thy Name, be the Praise, O Lord.*

FOURTH WEEK.

I.

TIS not one of a thousand of thy Favours I can record; but Eternity is before me, and that unlimited Duration shall be employ'd to rehearse the Wonders of thy Grace. Then in the great Assembly I will praise thee, I will declare thy Faithfulness, and tell to list'ning Angels what thou hast done for my Soul, even for me, the least in thy Family, unworthy to wipe the Feet of the meanest of the Servants of my Lord.

II.

How numberless are thy Thoughts of Love to my Soul! If I should count them, they are more than the Sand on the Shore: Thou hast again reprov'd my Unbelief, and given me a new conviction that my whole dependence is on thee: that second causes are nothing, but as thou dost give them Efficacy: All Nature obeys thee, and is govern'd at thy Command.

III.

III.

O MY God, I am again ready to distrust thee, and call in question thy Faithfulness: Oh! how deep has this cursed Weed of Infidelity rooted itself in my Nature, but thou canst root it out.

IV.

AGAIN I must begin the Rehearsal of thy Mercies, which will never have an End; for thou dost renew the Instances of thy Goodness to a poor ungrateful Sinner. Thou hast punctually fulfill'd the Promise on which I depended: Thou hast granted the Request of my Lips, and led me in a plain Way that I have not stumbled.

V.

THIS Day I have received an unexpected Favour: I doubted the Success indeed, but thou hast gently rebuk'd my Unbelief, and convinc'd me that all things are possible with thee, and that the Hearts of the Children of Men are in thy Hands.

VI.

WHETHER thou dost favour or afflict me, I rejoice in the Glory of thy Attributes in whatever Instance they are display'd. Be thy Honour advanc'd, whether in Mercy or Justice: I must still assert the Equity of thy Ways, and ascribe Righteousness to my
Maker

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Maker. Yet let me plead with thee, O my God, since Mercy is thy darling Attribute, Oh! let it now be exalted: Deal not with me in Severity, but Indulgence; for if thou shouldst mark what is amiss, who can stand before thee?

VII.

THOU dost heal my Diseases, and renew my Life; thou art the Guardian of my sleeping and my waking Hours. Glory to my God, whose Eyes never slumber.

F I F T H W E E K.

I.

THOU knowest my secret Grief, where my Pain lies, and what are my Doubts and Difficulties. In thy wonted Clemency, O Lord, dispel my Darkness; leave me not to any fatal Delusion in an Affair of everlasting Moment. This is my Hour of Information and Practice; beyond the Grave no Mistake can be rectify'd; as the Tree falls, so it must for ever lie.

II.

THY Goodness still pursues me, O heavenly Father, with an unwearied Course; new Instances of thy Faithfulness reproach my Unbelief. I sent up my Petition with a doubting Heart, and yet thou hast graciously deign'd to encourage my weak and staggering faith, which has often waver'd and fail'd, even in the View of the brightest Evidence of thy Power and Truth.

III.

III.

THOU dost seem resolv'd to leave my Unbelief without Excuse, by renewing the glorious Conviction of thy Clemency and Truth. O let not the Unworthiness of the Object turn back thy Benignity from its natural Course.

How many unrecorded Mercies have glided along with my fleeting Moments into thoughtless Silence, and long Oblivion? How prone is my ungrateful Heart to forget thy Benefits, or [(oh! amazing Guilt) to make an ungrateful Return?

V.

OH! never let my false Heart relapse into Distrust and Unbelief again; thou hast rebuk'd my Folly, and put a new Song of Praise into my Mouth: Let those infernal Suggestions vanish, that would once object against thy oft-experienc'd Truth. In this I would still triumph, and insult all the Malice of Hell. A Time will come when thou shalt be glorify'd in thy Saints, when thy Truth and Faithfulness shall appear in full Splendour, when the Beauty of thy Attributes shall be conspicuous, and clear from every Blemish that the Impiety of Men, or the Malice of Devils has charg'd on thy most righteous Providence.

VI.

LET me still assert, that the Ways of God are perfect Justice and Truth: I have a fresh Instance of thy Goodness to boast, and yet my ungrateful Heart is even now ready to distrust. The Lord encrease my Faith: Let thy renewed Favours silence my Unbelief, *to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no Unrighteousness in him.*

VII.

TEACH me your Language, ye Ministers of Light, that I may express my Wonder and Gratitude. O thou, who canst explain the secret Meaning of my Soul, take the Praise that human Words cannot express; accept these unutterable Attempts to praise thee.

SIXTH WEEK.

I.

LET me go on, O Most Holy, to record thy Faithfulness and Truth; let it be engraven in the Rock for ever; let it be impress'd on my Soul, and impossible to be effaced.----What Artifice of Hell is it that so often tempts me to distrust thee, and joins with my native Depravity to question thy Truth?

II.

OH! may I never forget this remarkable Preservation: thy gentle Hand supported me,
and

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and underneath were the everlasting Arms. *Thou hast kept all my Bones, not one of them is broken*: Thy Mercy upheld me even when it foresaw my Insensibility and Ingratitude. How does my Guilt heighten thy Clemency? How wondrous is thy Patience, O Lord, and thy rich Grace, that only gently rebuked me when thou mightest have taken severe Vengeance of my Sins?

III.

I MUST again begin the Rehearſal of thy Love. Thou haſt eas'd my Pain, ſcatter'd my Fears, and lengthen'd out my Days. Oh! may my Being be devoted to thee: let it be for ſome remarkable Service that I am reſtor'd to Health again.

IV.

I FIND thy Mercies renew'd with my fleeting Days, and to rehearſe them ſhall be my glad Employment. I truſted thee with my little Affairs, and thou haſt condeſcended to give me Succeſs. Lord, what is Man, that thou doſt thus graciously regard him? Even my Sins, my hourly Provocations, cannot put a Check to the Courſe of thy Beneficence; it keeps on its conquering Way againſt all the Oppoſition of my Ingratitude and Unbelief; and haſt thou not promis'd, O Lord, it ſhall run parallel with my Life, and meaſure out my Days?

V.

V.

JESUS, my never-failing Trust, I call'd on thy Name, and thou hast fully answered my Hopes: Let thy Praises dwell on my Tongue, let me breathe thy Name to the last Spark of Life. Thou hast scatter'd my Fears, and been gracious beyond all my Hopes: My faint and doubting Prayers have not been rejected; but oh! how slow are my Returns of Praise, how backward my Acknowledgments.

VI.

NEVER have I trusted thee in vain; Lord, increase my Faith; confirm it by a continued Series of thy Bounty: add this Favour to the rest, for Faith is the Gift of God, an Attainment above Reason or Nature. I am now waiting for the Accomplishment of a Promise! Oh! shew me thy Mercy and Truth; add this one Instance to the rest, and for ever silence the Suggestions of Hell, and my own Infidelity.

VII.

How rooted is this cursed Principle of Unbelief, that can yet distrust thee after so many recorded Instances of thy Love? How long will it be e're my wavering Soul shall entirely confide in thy Salvation? Oh! my God, pity my Weakness, give new Vigour to my Faith, and let me take up my Rest in thee for ever.

The E N D



